

Trave edges out Florence

La Seu d'Urgell Slalom

Australia's Jessica Fox picked up where she left off in Tokyo the previous month with a stunning performance to win the kayak at the World Cup in La Seu, Spain.

Czech Vit Prindis sent out a reminder of his quality with a tight win in the men's K1 at the third World Cup of the 2021 season.

Tokyo Olympic bronze medallist in the women's kayak event, Jessica Fox, produced the best run in the women's K1 final to claim her eighth World Cup win in kayak but her first on the 1992 Olympic course.

'For me it was all about having a good start and feeling tight and fast on the top section,' Fox said, 'and when I got through that hard five to six move I felt like I was flying and that I could really build my race. It was a really good run in terms of the execution of all the ups I wanted to do and improve on my semi final as well.'

The 27 year old Australian was 3.66 seconds faster than Mallory Franklin from Great Britain who was leading in the semi final while Slovakia's Eliska Mintalova won her first ever World Cup medal. Until now, the best result for Mintalova at World Cups was fourth place in Prague in 2019.

Maialen Chourraut, Tokyo Olympic Games silver medallist and Spanish hopeful for the medal in women's kayak, was just outside the final in 11th place, along with the 2019 world champion from La Seu, Eva Tercej (SLO), who finished the slalom in 12th position.

It was an exciting men's kayak final with Vit winning his second World Cup at the Spanish venue. The reigning European champion started among the first in the final run but produced a run that kept him at the top until the end of the slalom.

'I saw the second half of the race, which was really impressive,' Prindis said.

'The guys put on the really fast runs. It was four guys in just a half of a second, which is not usual. The course was really tricky, with so many parts where you can make a mistake. I am happy I put down the run with just small mistakes. This is a perfect start for me.'

Prindis was 0.36 second faster than Austrian Felix Oschmautz, who took his second silver World Cup medal of the season after a second placing in Markkleeberg.



Jennifer Fox won both her classes.

Slovenian Peter Kauzer was third at a course where he became the world champion for the first time back in 2009. The future of Spanish kayaks, Pau Echaniz, was fourth, only 0.01 second behind Kauzer.

Jessica Fox took her Games form to the white water of La Seu with a mesmerizing World Cup performance.

The Australian took gold in the women's C1 final by more than six seconds, to add to the K1 gold she took the previous day. Exciting young Spanish paddler Miquel Trave took the gold in the men's C1, his first slalom in a senior men's event.

Fox was fantastic all weekend and on Sunday she navigated the rapids faultlessly and stopped the clock at 93.07.

She was more than six seconds faster than Czech canoeist Tereza Fiserova, while Nuria Vilarrubla from Spain picked up the bronze medal on her home course.

The time Fox produced in the final was so fast that she would have finished seventh in the men's canoe final. She was one second up in the first split time but then pushed strongly in the second part of the course.

'I think it is hard to make time on the top. I really wanted to be solid and safe in the gates, not get any penalties,' Fox said.

'Once I got through the middle section I was a little bit low in the upright under the bridge but tried to keep the speed. I have no arms left. I really pushed hard.'

The 21 year old Trave was the Spanish hero of the day. He not only won his first World Cup, he won ahead of former C1 world champions David Florence from Great Britain and Franz Anton from Germany.

The canoeist from the local Cadi club in La Seu d'Urgell was the fastest in the semi final but did not feel much pressure starting last in the final. 'I used to like to be the last one. It's the pressure that I love. Obviously, it was at home. I knew I could do it well. I tried my best and I did really good,' Trave said.

'It's my third or fourth race here at home. I am really happy. I had one touch at the top but I followed the plan. I was calm. It's good.'

The course setting proved to be a real challenge for many top competitors. Olympic champion Benjamin Savsek, reigning world champion Cedric Joly, Ander Eloseggi, Kimberley Woods and Ana Satila are just a few of the favourites who stayed outside the final.

The World Cup glory would reach its climax the following weekend with double points on offer in Pau and the race for four of the six titles still wide open. Vit Prindis and Jessica Fox were both heading to this weekend leading in two title categories with Fox hoping to secure both the kayak and canoe titles.

Fox held a commanding 38 point lead over Germany's Elena Apel in the K1 but had a much tougher challenge in her Olympic gold medal event, the C1. Fox had 166 points, thanks to two gold medals this year, but was only six points ahead of Tereza Fiserova, who had picked up a bronze and two silvers in a consistent season.

Prindis held a five point lead over Italian Giovanni de Gennaro in the men's K1 but the big threat might come from Austria's Felix Oschmautz, who had finished second at the first two events and had 131 points overall.

Prindis shared the lead with another Austrian, Mario Leitner, in the men's extreme slalom. Both paddlers were on 117 points with Germany's former world champion, Stefan Hengst, third on 110 points.

A Slovakian headed the leader board in the men's canoe but was not one of the three powerhouses who have dominated men's C1 for the past decade. The 22 year old Marko Mirgorodsky had 134 points, despite not winning a medal so far this year, with Great Britain's David Florence on 132 after taking two silver medals.

2017 extreme slalom world champion Caroline Trompeter held a commanding lead in the women's extreme slalom category. The German sat on 140 points but her nearest two rivals, Russia's Kseniia Krylova and Austria's Corinna Kuhnle, would not be contesting the extreme slalom in Pau.

ICF

K1W: 1 J Fox, Australia, 89.92. 2 M Franklin, GB, 93.58. 3 E Mintalova, Slovensko, 97.28

K1M: 1 V Prindis, Ceska, 82.76. 2 F Oschmoutz, Österreich, 83.12. 3 P Kauzer, Slovenija, 83.26.

C1W: 1 J Fox, Australia, 93.07. 2 T Fiserova, Ceska, 99.39. 3 N Vilarrubla, España, 100.43.
4 M Franklin, GB, 100.55. 8 B Farrow, GB, 108.27.

C1M: 1 M Trave, España, 88.81. 2 D Florence, GB, 89.13. 3 F Anton, Deutschland, 90.42.

XW: 1 M Satkova, Ceska. 2 L Jones, NZ. 3 A Satila, Brasil.

XM: 1 B Neveu, France. 2 M Leitner, Österreich. 3 M Munsch, Schweiz.



Vit Prindis won the men's K1.



Miquel Trave won on home water.