

# Franklin takes world C1 title

## World U23/J Championships

Czech Lukas Rohan qualified fastest for the semi finals of the men's C1 on the opening day of the U23 and junior world championships in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Rohan finished in a time of 92.63, more than one second ahead of leading local hope Marko Mirgorodsky in 93.70, with another Czech, Vaclav Chaloupka, third in 95.05.

Germany's Florian Breuer, who was hoping to defend his 2016 U23 world title this week, finished fourth.

'It was a safe run and now I'm onto the next run so that's great,' Breuer said.

'I'm looking forward to getting the chance to defend my title but it will be hard because everyone else is keeping up. We will see what comes around.

'It's a bit different now because you gain some experience and you know how to deal with the situation with the finals, semi finals and qualification so you can be a bit more calm than the others.

'There is some pressure on you but I like it.'

Breuer's 2017 campaign suffered a setback earlier this year when he contracted a mystery illness, which led to his shedding a lot of weight in less than a week and missing senior selection.

'I'm not that happy because I'm not able to race World Cups and world championships this year,' he said, 'but I got to finish my police education so I got to concentrate on that. I will take my experience from the U23 worlds with me and next year I will be in the senior category and we will see what comes around.'



Germany's Florian Breuer in C1.



Local paddler Jakub Grigar.



Glejteková with a backdrop of water.

Czechs dominated the junior C1 event with Vojtech Heger quickest in 96.45 and team mate Matyas Lhota second in 96.62.

French teenager Alexis Bobon was third in 102.12.

In the U23 mixed C2 it was the Czech pairing of Jana Matulkova and Adam Lerch who qualified first.

Two of the biggest names competing at this world championships had their colours lowered on Wednesday but both were safely through to their respective semi finals.

Leading local paddler and Rio Olympian Jakub Grigar qualified in eleventh place for the U23 K1 semi finals while multiple world champion and twice Olympic medallist Jessica Fox finished second in the U23 women's C1.

France's Mathieu Desnos was fastest in the K1, his time of 84.06 putting him ahead of Germany's Stefan Hengst in 84.56 with another Frenchman, Pol Oulhen, third in 86.13.

20 year old Grigar, twice a world junior champion and the defending U23 title holder, said he felt flat even before the race started.

'I didn't really enjoy the run,' Grigar said.

'I felt a little bit bad from the beginning until the end. I'm happy I made the semi final but, hopefully, it is going to be better on Friday.'

Austria's Viktoria Wolffhardt surprised even herself with her fast time in the first run of the U23 C1, posting an error free time of 111.89 to put her ahead of Fox on 113.57 with European champion Kimberley Woods of Great Britain third in 113.92.

'I was really surprised when I came to the finish because the run didn't feel so well,' Wolffhardt said.

'I haven't had so much training in C1 because I had surgery on my knee so I haven't been able to get into my C1 for quite a long time.

'I'm still not secure in my C1 but it gets better with every session I'm doing so I'm so happy with my result today. I still feel it. I'm sitting differently in my boat; it's not the same on both sides.'

In the junior events Czech Tomas Lima was quickest in the K1, in a clean time of 88.04. Austria's Felix Oschmautz was second fastest in 91.76 but also had four seconds in penalties.

'It was a good run. I felt a bit of hesitation but from half of the run I felt really comfortable in the water and I knew if I brought it to the line it will be okay,' Oschmautz said.

'It means a lot to me because this is my last junior worlds so I want to show off my skills and have a good race.'

Another Czech was quickest in the junior women's C1 with Eva Rihova one of the few paddlers to post a clean run.

Rihova finished in 112.81 seconds with Poland's Aleksandra Stach second in 115.13 and Germany's Andrea Herzog third in 116.35.

'I'm happy because the run went how I wanted it to,' Rihova said.

'The jump is so hard and, being a left gate and I'm paddling on the right side, it makes it a bit hard for me.'

Austria's Lisa Leitner had a point to prove when she set off on her opening K1 run, her return to competition after being suspended by her federation for two World Cups.

16 year old Czech Antonie Galuskova was the quickest qualifier in the women's junior K1 while Slovakia's Gewissler and Skakala were fastest in the U23 men's C2 and Czech's Pohanka and Wendl were fastest in the men's junior C2.

Leitner was disqualified at the European Championships for an underweight boat and the Austrian federation then disqualified her for two World Cups.

22 year old Leitner responded on Thursday with a cracking first run, setting the fastest time of 91.88, more than four seconds quicker than multiple world champion Jessica Fox in 96.21 with Great Britain's Mallory Franklin third in 97.61.

'It was really fun to race. I just felt really lucky today,' Leitner said.

'On every upstream I could do it with a sweep. I didn't plan it like that; it just happened. It was fun to race.

'Is it luck? I don't know but if you just have fun of course you are going to be lucky because it's just the right feeling.'

Galuskova posted a time of 101.78, with Antonia Oschmautz second in 102.59 and Andrea Herzog third in 103.72.

'My run was really good. I enjoyed every second,' Galuskova said.

'Sometimes my training was bad and I was really scared but everything is just fine. I was a bit slow.

'This is a big experience for me.'

Jakub Grigar landed an emotional home town win and Mallory Franklin broke through for her first big win of 2017 on Friday.

Grigar, the defending world U23 K1 champion and a twice world