

Marcello Beda in the men's U23 K1. If Mirgorodsky paddled for almost any other country in the world he would be a household name but the 19 year old is constantly in the shadow of some of the biggest names in the sport, all Slovakian and all world beaters so it is only at junior and U23 level that Mirgorodsky gets the chance to take the limelight away from the likes of Benus, Slafkovsky and Martikan and he has taken every opportunity presented to him, winning two world junior C1 titles, an under 23 world title last year and then qualifying fastest this time. His time of 82.15 was only 0.20 quicker than Czech Vaclav Chaloupka.



Miquel Trave won the junior C1.



Lazkano/Llorente, winners of the U23 mixed C2.



The Micozzis had the fastest C2 time.



Camille Prigent, U23 women's winner.

'Today was easy on the course so I just paddled and it was good to finish first,' Mirgorodsky said. 'This is a big event; it's very important for me. This year I also raced World Cups, which are also important, but the world championships I think are the most important.'

Brazil's Satila was one of the favourites for the women's U23 K1 but said she was not entirely happy with her qualifying run despite posting the quickest time of 89.39. 'I was feeling pretty good before the race started and I managed to do quite a quick run,' Satila said. 'But I'm really disappointed about some easy mistakes and I lost so much time but I finished first so that is a good way to start the competition.'

Weratschnig was looking to make a big statement in Ivrea after some disappointing results in the opening World Cups. Her U23 C1 qualifying time of 93.14 was 2.85 seconds ahead of the next fastest competitor. 'It's like being on holiday here in Ivrea, the Italian feeling and everything,' Weratschnig said. 'I'm not happy with my year so far because I am always out in the semi finals. I've never had a really good run but I hope that will change now.' Beda was the only real surprise on the Wednesday but spurred on by a big and passionate Italian crowd he was able to post an error free time of 79.74 to finish ahead of Austria's Mario Leitner on 80.14.

Slovakia's Sona Stanovska was the star performer on the first day of junior competition, qualifying first in K1 and a close second in the C1. A slight gate touch on her C1 run denied Stanovska top spot in both disciplines but she headed into the weekend's competition with a strong chance of a golden double. Only Czech Gabriela Satkova bettered her time in the C1, her clean run of 97.00 putting her ahead of the Slovak's 98.29. In the men's competition France's Nicolas Gestin was fastest qualifier in the C1 while another Frenchman, Anatole Delassus, headed a France quinella in the men's K1 junior qualifiers but Stanovska was Thursday's stand out, her time of 93.87 in the K1 clocking in more than 3 seconds quicker than Great Britain's Bethan Forrow. After a string of 4th and 5th K1 placings at European and world junior championships Stanovska was hoping this, her final year in junior competition, would provide her breakthrough. 'There were just some little mistakes,' Stanovska said. 'In K1 I say that I have never had luck because at my first European championships I finished 4th, then I was 5th and again 4th. I'm still waiting for my medal. This is my last chance so, hopefully, I can do it.'

Despite her clean run, Satkova felt she could have done better in the C1. 'My run wasn't as good as I wanted to go; there were a lot of little mistakes,' she said. 'The result really surprised me. Maybe others made bigger mistakes than I did. I've been feeling pretty good but before my run I was a little bit stressed but now it's okay.' Gestin followed up his team gold medal from the opening day with the fastest qualifying time in the junior C1 on Thursday morning. His 85.42 put him ahead of Czech Vojtech Heger and Spain's Miquel Trave. Delassus was on the course well before the top 20 paddlers in the men's K1, his time of 81.43 putting enormous pressure on the remaining paddlers. Fellow Frenchman Vincent Delahaye got the closest, posting 81.61 to edge out Spain's Pau Echaniz in the closest event of the day.

Italian siblings Elena and Flavio Micozzi thrilled the home crowd with gold in the junior mixed C2 on Friday morning. Spain's Miren Lazkano and David Llorente won the U23 C2 mixed event. The Micozzis had three gate touches on their final run but, in an event where no crew escaped penalty, their time of 113.77 was easily the quickest. France's Jules Bernardet and Doriane Delassus finished 2nd, more than 7 seconds behind. 'We are very happy but also a bit embarrassed because this is our first time in front of our home crowd,' Flavio Micozzi said. 'We were nervous before the race so we made some jokes and had a laugh to try and relax. We get on well together.'

Lazkano and Llorente were even more impressive in the U23 final, their time of 103.08 more than 8 seconds quicker than Russia's Elizaveta Terekhova and Igor Mikhailov. 'We solved all our mistakes from the semi final so we did a very good run in the final,' Llorente said. 'When we crossed the line and saw we were in 1st position it was a really good feeling. This week was the first time we competed together; we did just one training run before but it felt really good.'

Lazkano said it was a new experience for both of them. 'We were very nervous before the start because we knew we could do better in the final,' she said. 'It's really different. We are used to doing the course by ourselves but we managed to do what we wanted.'

Chaloupka and Frenchwoman Camille Prigent broke through for the biggest wins of their careers on Saturday and Miquel Trave and Slovenia's Eva Hocevar identified themselves as stars of the future with slashing wins in the junior division in front of a big crowd. Chaloupka went one better than his silver medal in 2017 to win the men's U23 C1 world title while Prigent took the women's U23 K1 crown. Chaloupka