



Joe Clark.



Jessica Fox.



Jules Bernardet.



Martin Dougoud.

ICF photographs

Fox clean sweep and Clarke wins

Kraków Slalom

Reigning world champions Joseph Clarke and Jessica Fox would take winning form into the Paris Olympics after both tamed an unruly Kraków course to take the titles at the World Cup on the Friday.

Great Britain's Clarke, who won at the Olympics at Rio 2016, was just able to edge out Czech Vit Prindis in the men's K1 final to arrest a form slump which had seen him fail to make a podium at the opening two World Cups of the season.

Australian Fox, a four time world champion and Olympic silver and two time bronze medallist in the women's K1, took her first kayak win of the season by finishing just ahead of Rio 2016 champion Maialen Chourraut of Spain.

'I'm really happy; it was such a hard race,' Fox said.

'I'm just happy I was able to put down two good runs; that was my goal here but it was a hard course which was super tough.'

American Ria Sribar enjoyed her best international result by finishing third behind Fox and Chourraut.

Clarke had had a frustrating start to the 2024 season but his big focus was getting back on the Olympic podium after missing selection for the Tokyo Games.

He also revealed he had gone into Friday's runs carrying an injury.

'I'm very happy, especially because during cross training I pulled a muscle in my neck so I didn't even know for sure I was going to race today,' Clarke said.

'I've got a lot of tape on my neck but I love racing at this place. I've had a lot of great results.

'I've had a disappointing season so far in slalom so it's good to go into the Olympics in winning form.

Prindis finished a close second with fellow Czech Jakub Krejci taking bronze.

Jessica Fox notched up the 50th individual gold medal of her World Cup career with a victory in the women's C1 final in Kraków on the Saturday.

It was also the ninth time Fox had won both the kayak and canoe titles at a single World Cup.

In the men's final France's Jules Bernardet celebrated his first World Cup of the year with an incredible gold medal.

Fox won her first World Cup title back in 2010 and on the Saturday registered her 50th.

She now had 32 canoe wins as well as 17 in kayak and one in kayak cross. This win came despite a two second penalty for a gate touch.

Fox said she went into the event not certain if she would be able to show her best.

'I felt really tired and flat today so I'm just happy I was able to step up when I needed to,' Fox said.

'It's been a great weekend. I'm really pleased to have been able to finish off with this win.

'It was really important for me to refocus after yesterday's win; there are so many challenges on this course.'

Fox won her first canoe and kayak double back in 2013 in Tacen, Slovenia. This weekend was the second time she had won both in Kraków.

Brazil's Ana Satila would go to Paris confident of her form after taking silver. 'I feel so tired after half a season so I'm really excited with this run,' Satila said.

'The course is so challenging physically.'

Czech Martina Satková took the bronze.

Such is the overall strength of the French slalom team that many of the world's best paddlers can struggle to get opportunities to compete at the top level.



Such was the case for Jules Bernardet, who finally got his opportunity this weekend and responded with the best run of the day and a gold medal.

'I've prepared so hard for this World Cup because it's my first one for the year so I'm so happy that I was able to make a good result,' he said.

Slovakia's Matej Benus would head to Paris feeling he was ready to return to the podium after returning his best result of the season so far by finishing second.

'It's the first time I've had a good run this year,' the Rio Olympic silver medallist said.

'It was pretty tiring; you have to paddle hard but I'm very happy with this result in my last competition before the Olympics.'

Great Britain's Ryan Westley finished third.

Jessica Fox made more canoeing history, becoming the first to win three individual gold medals over a single weekend at a slalom World Cup.

The Tokyo Olympic gold medallist completed the hat trick in Kraków on the Sunday, taking out the kayak cross final to add to the kayak and canoe gold medals she won over the previous two days.

Switzerland's Martin Dougoud won his first kayak cross in the men's and would head to Paris as one of the favourites when the event made its Games debut.

Fox only decided late to make the journey to Kraków for the final World Cup before Paris and then admitted to feeling tired and flat ahead of her canoe competition but, having already secured her 50th overall World Cup gold 24 hours earlier, her confidence was sky high.

'This is incredible, so unexpected. I'm absolutely thrilled,' Fox said.

'This has been such a perfect weekend. I couldn't have imagined it turning out like this. You never know what can happen in kayak cross. I really enjoyed myself.

'It was chaos early in the final. I just wanted to get a good start and then to stay clear headed throughout the race.'

Fox had already for the ninth time won both the canoe and kayak gold medals at a single World Cup but now became the first to win three finals.

Czech Tereza Kneblova took silver ahead of Great Britain's reigning world champion, Kimberley Woods.

In the men's competition the exit at the semi final stage of three time world champion Joe Clarke threw the race for gold wide open.

Dougoud took bronze behind Clarke at last year's world championships and held his form in a high class Sunday final.

'The final was really tough; you always have to fight because you never really know what is happening, Dougoud said.

'Sitting on the ramp, you don't think about things too much. In kayak cross it is sometimes a game of luck. Today was my day.'

Vit Prindis finished second with the current overall World Cup leader, Mathurin Madore of France, taking the bronze.

ICF

K1W: 1 J Fox, Australia, 93.49. 2 M Chourraut, España, 94.24. 3 R Sribar, USA, 99.03. 8 L Leaver, GB, 103.98.

K1M: 1 J Clarke, GB, 85.33. 2 V Prindis, Czechia, 85.96. 3 J Krejci, Czechia, 86.34. 11 J Dickson, GB.

C1W: 1 J Fox, Australia, 102.71. 2 A Satila, Brasil, 105.99. 3 G Satková, Czechia, 110.35. 12 E Miller, GB.

C1M: 1 J Bernardet, France, 91.12. 2 M Benus, Slovensko, 93.39. 3 R Westley, GB, 93.94. 9 A Burgess, GB, 98.27.

K1WX: 1 J Fox, Australia. 2 T Kneblova, Czechia. 3 K Woods, GB.

K1MX: 1 M Dougoud, Schweiz. 2 Prindis, Czechia. 3 M Madore, France.