



*Adam Burgess.*

'I really wanted to just leave it all out there today.

'I've paid the price and missed opportunities by being a little cautious at times and I really wanted to just go out with confidence.'

Benus ranked 11th in the semi finals before putting together a brilliant performance in the final as he held on for bronze with 97.03.

It was his first Olympic medal in eight years after taking C1 silver at Rio 2016.

'It's amazing. I am actually very, very tired but very happy. It is our first medal for Slovakia,' Benus said.

'My run was pretty good but I was slow in the difficult combination in [gates] six and seven. It was easier for lefties and I am righty so it was a little bit tight but there was no chance of winning today with Nicolas Gestin's time so I will take third place.'

Germany's two time Olympic medallist Sideris Tasiadis finished just 0.24 behind Benus to place fourth while a two second penalty for Spain's Miquel Trave saw him end up fifth.

Slovenia's Benjamin Savsek, the defending Olympic champion and



*Giovanni de Genaro.*

last year's world gold medallist, produced a storming final section to edge ahead of early front runner Benus.

However, his hopes were dashed when a 50 second penalty was issued following a mistake on gate five.

Senegalese Yves Bourhis' celebrations were also short lived.

He crossed the finish line quicker than Benus, only to realize he had received a 50 second penalty for missing gate nine.

Titouan Castryck raised hopes of a second gold for hosts France in slalom after topping the standings in the men's kayak heats.

With excitement among French fans still high after Nicolas Gestin's sensational gold in the men's canoe the previous day, Castryck ensured there was more reason for the home crowd to cheer in searing heat this day.

The 19 year old, a double junior world champion, had already tasted success at the Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium, having achieved K1 gold when it hosted the World Cup the previous October.

He was in impressive form this day, posting the quickest time in both runs with 83.71 followed by 80.09.

'It is really nice to put down two clean runs,' said Castryck.

'I do take inspiration from Nicolas [Gestin] but it's a different discipline.

'Yesterday it was a really nice moment to cheer him on and have him on the podium.

'He won but it is not done for us.

'Of course it helps that we are training here for a long time. It makes a lot of difference but other guys have been practising here a lot.

'It is really good to race at home as it makes a big difference.'

Czechia's Jiri Prskavec, the reigning Olympic champion in the event, looked in fine fettle as he bid to retain his crown, registering 83.74 for second.

After a shaky start in the first run when he touched an early gate, Italy's Giovanni de Gennaro posted a time of 85.34 in the second to place third.

Great Britain's Joseph Clarke picked up a 50 second penalty in the opening run after missing gate six.

It meant there was extra pressure on the second run but the Rio 2016 gold medallist handled it with ease, ranking fourth with 85.62.

'Relief, probably the biggest word,' said Clarke.

'Obviously, I know I'm fully capable of making the semi final but knowing you can and doing it are two different things, especially with the pressure from the crowd, the media.

'More importantly, internally. All the training and hard work has gone into this but, yeah, just to tick the box; get the job done.

'Not our finest hour but more than enough to qualify through today, so that's all that matters.'

The top six also featured Australia's Timothy Anderson and Switzerland's Martin Dougoud as they advanced to the semi finals.

Jessica Fox had become the most successful canoe slalom paddler in Olympic history after completing a canoe and kayak double.

After capturing the women's K1 title on Sunday Fox pulled off a stunning performance to retain the women's C1 crown this day.

It was her third Olympic gold, adding to her canoe success at Tokyo 2020, to match Tony Estanguet, who was the only other paddler to have achieved three individual titles in slalom.

Fox also sat on six Olympic medals, moving ahead of Slovakian great Michal Martikan, who had five.

'I have never thought about those records,' said Fox.

'They have never felt attainable or even something that I could possibly dream about it.

'Each Olympic experience has been very different; some have been brilliant and others have been a bit disappointing. This is just magical.

'To be named among some of Australia's great champions in Olympic history, I can't believe it, and in our sport it is very special to follow in the footsteps of Tony Estanguet and Michal Martikan as I grew up watching them.

'I'm also very proud to be doing it as a woman.'

Germany's Elena Lilik and United States ace Evy Leibfarth both picked up their first Olympic medals, securing silver and bronze respectively after a thrilling final.

There was no stopping Fox as she powered down the course, showing great tenacity and technique to navigate the gates.

Lilik had put down an impressive time of 103.54, six seconds quicker than the next best paddler, Leibfarth, but Fox was too strong for the rest of the field, taking the title in 101.06.

Fox is the first slalom paddler to win twice at one Olympic Games.

'To be able to stay composed is the coolest feeling as an athlete,' said Fox.