

'When you have worked so hard as an athlete in training, to be able to pull it off when it matters is what we all work towards.

'The fact that I did it twice is a credit to the hard work that we have put in.

Seventh fastest in the semi final, Lilik produced a scintillating run to take a medal.

After the disappointment of Ricarda Funk's 50 second penalty in the women's kayak final and two time Olympic medallist Sideris Tasiadis' missing out on a men's canoe medal, Lilik delivered joy to Germany.

'It feels unreal and super exciting,' said Lilik, the 2021 world champion.

'The crowd was crazy.

'There were so many Germans here screaming my name I got goosebumps.

'I was so happy with my run and so proud.

'I just went for it and had no fear.

'All of those emotions came out at the finish line.'

Leibfarth only sneaked into the final after taking the last spot available but seized her opportunity when it mattered most.

Learning from her mistakes, Leibfarth produced a superb run, finishing eight seconds quicker than she managed in the semi final.

It was a superb response as she crossed in 109.95 to secure a place on the Olympic podium for the first time.

Her medal was confirmed after Czechia's Gabriela Satkova, who posted the quickest semi final time, crossed the finish line in seventh after registering a two second penalty for a touch on gate two.

'It seems crazy that I'm an Olympic medallist,' said Leibfarth.

'I'm able to be here with my family. My dad is my coach and my mom is here and all of my best friends. It's just so special to know that everyone who's been a part of this journey is here for this moment.

'It's not just my medal; it is everyone's medal who has been there for the journey.'

Italy's Giovanni de Gennaro said he was in 'disbelief' after clinching the men's kayak gold.

Eighth in the semi final, the 32 year old paddler delivered when it mattered most to capture the Olympic crown.

The reigning European champion became the third Italian man to win this event after Pierpaolo Ferrazzi at Barcelona 1992 and Daniele Molmenti at London 2012.

Titouan Castryck finished just 0.20 off de Gennaro as he took silver while Spain's Pau Echaniz secured a shock bronze.

De Gennaro produced a stunning showing, sweeping down the course in a time of 88.22, more than three seconds quicker than he achieved in the semi final.

He was then left to watch as the other big contenders for the title made costly mistakes.

Defending champion Jiri Prskavec's hopes were dented when the Czech ace struck gate seven and his chances were over when he clattered gate 16.

Joseph Clarke, the Rio 2016 gold medallist, was the fastest in the semi final but he also missed out on a medal, crossing in 89.82 to finish fifth and confirm de Gennaro as the Olympic champion.

'I'm in disbelief,' said de Gennaro.

'I don't know what has happened. I'm super happy that I have this piece of gold around my neck, just an amazing day.

'I'm so happy that my family is here and I can share all these emotions with the crowd.'

'I thought there was still room for someone to get in front of me but in the end the time was enough. It was a really close one and this time the luck was on my side.'

Castryck came the closest to denying de Gennaro the title as he looked to secure a second slalom gold for France following Nicolas Geste's success in canoe.

The 19 year old put together a fine run only to make a slight error before gate 17, a section of the course where other paddlers had come unstuck.

He powered to the finish but it was not enough for gold as he earned silver in 88.42.

'I'm disappointed,' said Castryck. 'I was really paddling for the gold today but small mistakes made me second.

'I made small balance mistakes so it got me out of the wave and I had to get back two metres so a lot of time lost and when you see 0.20 at the end you missed those two seconds.'

The surprise of the day came from Echaniz, a 23 year old paddler who had never previously got on the podium at a World Cup.

Echaniz sealed the 12th and last place to advance to the final before pulling off a stunning performance.



Joe Clarke.

Going first in the final, Echaniz produced a raw time of 86.87 which would have seen him take gold but a two second penalty for a touch on gate 19 saw him come away with bronze.

'It is my first Olympics and my first medal; this is crazy,' said the 23 year old.

'I've been dreaming about this run for a long time so this is a dream come true.

'The semi final was hard for me so I knew I could do a much better run. I just went for everything and I got it.'

Joseph Clarke and Camille Prigent set the pace as kayak cross made its Olympic Games debut.

The time trials saw 38 men and 37 women lay down a marker to secure their seeding and draw placement for the weekend's heats.

Clarke, who had qualified fastest for Thursday's men's kayak final before missing out on the medals with a fifth placed finish, put in another blistering run on the course.

Last of the 38 paddlers to go, Clarke posted a time of 66.08 seconds to push Brazil's Pedro Goncalves into second place.

Goncalves, whose 50 second penalty in the semi finals saw him miss out on a place in the kayak final, posted 66.41.

Titouan Castryck, fresh from his brilliant silver medal in Thursday's kayak final, was the first paddler to break 68 seconds as he posted 67.29 for third, just ahead of team mate Boris Neveu (67.48).

Italy's Giovanni de Gennaro followed up his gold medal heroics from the previous day with another fast run to place fifth in a time of 67.71.

New Zealand's Finn Butcher, Felix Oschmautz of Austria, Noah Hegge (Germany), Mateusz Polaczyk (Poland) and Manuel Ochoa (Spain) completed the top 10.

'That was the aim of the game, to try and get top of the time trials,' said a delighted Clarke.

'It gives you first seed for the first round and, as long as you keep winning those rounds, then you keep getting that first lane pick. I've got my eye on what lane I would ideally be in given the opportunity so, hopefully, I can go on to do good things.'

A determined Clarke had his eye on gold after missing out on the medals in Thursday's kayak cross.

'That's why I'm here, to try and win the event,' he said.

'I think when we get going and start knocking a few people out is when it's going to start getting interesting because the last 16, last eight, last four, are going to be really tight racing.'

In the women's time trials, Great Britain's Mallory Franklin, whose 50 second penalty in the final of the women's canoe blew her chances of a medal, recovered from that disappointment to post an impressive time of 71.85.

That set the standard until the final four paddlers of the time trial, home favourite Prigent taking top spot with a time of 70.33 before double Paris gold medallist Jessica Fox followed her home in 70.84.

Franklin's early time was good enough for third place with her team mate, Kimberley Woods, the last to paddle but only managing 16th place.

New Zealand's Luuka Jones was fourth in 72.10 and Ana Satila fifth in 72.64.

Evy Leibfarth, still on a high from her podium finish in the women's canoe final, was sixth, ahead of Ricarda Funk and Noemie Fox.

Prigent would now kick off Saturday's round one races as she came up against Slovenia's Eva Tercelj and Czechia's Tereza Fiserova in the first race of the day at 15:30 CET.

'I'm just trying to take it step by step,' Prigent said.