

Anna Palmer is sole British entry

World Championships

Czechia's Martin Fuksa and Josef Dostal got back to business after the euphoria of their Olympic success as they impressed on the opening day of the sprint world championships in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Just two weeks after their Olympic wins, Fuksa and Dostal returned to action, hoping to capture world titles.

Fuksa had his eyes set on winning the men's canoe single 500m after capturing the Olympic crown over the 1,000m distance.

The 31 year old, who last won the men's C1 500m world title back in 2017, breezed through his heat, clocking a time of 1:52.280, four seconds quicker than second placed Conrad-Robin Scheibner of Germany.

'It's a little bit different than in Paris,' said Fuksa.

'It's been 14 days since the best race of my career so it is not easy to be back on the course but I like this sport and I won this heat so I am in Sunday's final.

'It wasn't easy training after the Olympics because there were a lot of press things to do.

'I like this sport so I wanted to come here to Uzbekistan after the Olympics.

'I am here, I'm ready and we will see what happens.

'I like 500m so I want another medal on Sunday.

'Every medal is important for me.

'I am a little bit of a collector of medals so I like them and I will do everything.'

Dostal had a busy opening day as he teamed up with fiancée Anezka Paloudova to seal a place in the mixed kayak double 500m final before advancing in the men's kayak single 500m.

The newly crowned Olympic champion in the men's K1 1,000m looked strong over the 500m distance, getting the better of Individual Neutral Athlete Uladzislau Kravets in the semi final.

Portugal's Fernando Pimenta also made his mark in the men's K1 500m as he cruised into the final.

'I think I did a very good race in the heat and semi final and now it's time to rest and prepare for the mixed K4,' said Pimenta.

'Every time I say after the Olympics, if I take a medal or not I want to come here and fight for good results and give my best.'

Ukraine's Liudmyla Luzan arrived in Samarkand after another successful Olympics, having taken silver in the women's C2 500m in Paris.

Luzan won her heat in the women's C1 500m as she sought to win it for a second time after being crowned champion in the event in 2022.

She finished ahead of Chile's Maria Jose Mailliard, who won the title in 2021.

'I'm feeling good,' said Luzan.

'The goal was to go straight through to the final so I am happy to do that.

'Everyone was preparing hard for the race as it is the world championships.

'I respect all my competitors and I'm happy to win this heat against these strong athletes.

'This is one of my favourite races and distances but I don't want to say too much. I want to show what I can do.

'I decided to compete in this before the Olympics so I am here and I want to show myself.

'The Olympics is a different level in the sport and when you participate there you fall in love with canoeing once again.

'I have three Olympic medals but not gold yet so I am still competing and I will keep showing myself.'



The first races of the day saw Hungary's Emese Kohalmi and Norway's Maria Virik top their respective heats in the women's K1 1,000m.

China's Xina Jiang and Hungary's Giada Bragato impressed in the women's C1 1,000m to move through to the final as heat winners.

Germany's Felix Daniel Frank and Martin Hiller and Sweden's Joakim Lindberg and Martin Nathell posted the quickest times in their respective heats in the men's K2 1,000m.

The men's C2 1,000m heats saw AIN paddlers Zakhar Petrov and Ivan Dmitriev and Hungarians Balazs Adolf and Daniel Fejes come out on top.

Portugal's Teresa Portela and Francisca Laia and AIN paddlers Volha Khudzenka and Maryna Litvinchuk powered through to the women's K2 200m final after topping their respective heats.

Moldova's Mihai Chihaiia and Maria Olarasu won their heat in the mixed C2 500m before AIN's Alexey Korovashkov and Ekaterina Shliapnikova took top spot in the next.

Portuguese pair Teresa Portela and Messias Baptista pulled off a stunning fightback to win the mixed kayak double 500m.

There was just 0.011 second separating the top two as Portela and Baptista edged Individual Neutral Athletes Volha Khudzenka and Dzmitry Natynchyk in a gripping race.

Khudzenka and Natynchyk were closing in on victory, only to be pipped on the line by Portela and Baptista, who triumphed by 1:37.592.

The victory ended 36 year old Portela's long wait for a world title as she now completed the full set of medals with the gold adding to her bronze in 2009 and silver in 2022.

'It is really special to be here after the Olympics and enjoy this success with Messias as he is a good friend of mine,' said Portela.

'It is great to conquer it with him.

'It's my first world championships gold so it is special.

'We knew we were able to do a good race.

'There were a lot of good athletes in this field so we knew it would be a good fight until the end but we won so we are really happy.'

Khudzenka and Natynchyk took silver with Czechia's Josef Dostal and Anezka Paloudova claiming bronze.

The world medal is another great moment in a year that has seen the Czech couple get engaged, Paloudova make her Olympic debut and Dostal win at Paris.

'This is my first senior medal at a world championships in canoe sprint so I am super excited and I am more than happy to win this with my fiancé,' said Paloudova.

AIN paddlers Mikita Borykau and Aleh Yurenia were crowned world champions in the men's K2 1,000m with a fine performance in the final.

Yurenia said he overcame illness to take gold with Borykau at a sweltering Samarkand.

'This was the main distance for us at the Tokyo Olympics but it was not good,' said Yurenia.

'It has been the dream for the past three years to make it happen over this distance.

'There have been very hard days because of the temperature and I was ill but during the race everything went well.

'We just came together and made the best finish we could.'

Joakim Lindberg and Martin Nathell sealed silver with Germany's Felix Daniel Frank and Martin Hiller bagging bronze.

Alena Nazdrova emerged victorious in the women's canoe single 1,000m after leading from start to finish.

'I am very happy that at the end of the season after all the races I still produced my best,' said Nazdrova.



Martin Fuksa.



Josef Dostal.



Liudmyla Luzan.