



Charlotte Henshaw.

GB's crushing win

Paralympic Games

Australia's Curtis McGrath and Great Britain's Charlotte Henshaw looked in fine form on the opening day of paracanoe action as they bid to do the double at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

McGrath, who held a record three Paralympic gold medals, got off to a flying start on Friday, topping his heat in the men's KL2 to advance to the final.

The Australian then backed that up by producing a Paralympic Games best time of 48.97 in the men's VL3 to ensure he remained on track for back to back doubles, having done the same at Tokyo 2020.

'I was nervous this morning with a lot of excitement,' said McGrath.

'What adds to the nerves is that we are one of the very last events of the Games.

'The weather was a bit average yesterday and now it is nice with a bit of headwind so I was able to get out there and do a really good race and I am very happy with how it all came together.'

McGrath was also delighted to see fans back at the Paralympic Games



after competing in front of no spectators at Tokyo 2020 owing to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Among the crowd at the Vaires-sur-Marne nautical stadium were members of the Australian army with whom McGrath previously served.

'It's great to have them here as it's come full circle,' said McGrath, who lost both his legs in a mine blast in 2012 in Afghanistan while serving as a combat engineer for the Australian army.

'Some were there in Rio 2016 and they had planned to come to Tokyo but it didn't work out but they made the trip to Paris.'

McGrath's team mate, Scott Martlew, secured top spot in the other men's KL2 heat while Ukraine's Vladyslav Yepifanov also moved through to the final with McGrath in the men's VL3.

There was also double delight for Henshaw, who starred in both the women's VL3 and women's KL2, clinching her place in the finals of both.

'It was always going to be a difficult morning backing up the kayak with the va'a in the space of 45 minutes,' said Henshaw 'but we have



Curtis McGrath.



Hope Gordon.