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Slalom Women's K1 heats report and photographs

Beijing - Five women shortlisted themselves as the serious contenders for the Olympic women's K1 medals during the two runs of the heats at the Shunyi Canoeing Park on Wednesday, as many of the world's best struggled with the pounding water of the demanding 280m artificial white water course.

With six paddlers eliminated at the end of the two heats, the competition for gold looks set to see a showdown between defending Olympic champion Elena Kaliska of Slovakia, world number one and multiple former Olympic gold medallist Stepanka Hilgertova, ace German Jennifer Bongardt, French rising star Emilie Fer and local hero Jingjing Li of China.

Hilgertova, Kaliska and plucky Australian Jacqui Lawrance were the only women to post clear runs, as the churning and surging water on the course asked plenty of questions of the women. In the second runs Kaliska and Hilgertova both upped their intensity to become the only women to post sub 92 second runs.

The two runs produced plenty of drama, particularly as many women fell prey to the big holes and the "Vortex" drop below gate fourteen.

Fifty second penalties for missing gates in their first runs sealed the fates of Canadian Sarah Boudens, Andorra's Monserrat Garcia Riberaygua, talented Spaniard Maialen Chourraut, Briton Fiona Pennie and Kiwi Luuka Jones.

The days most dramatic demise however belonged to Russia's Aleksandra Perova. After posting the second fastest first run, she was caught by the tricky churning water around gate six and capsized. She failed to roll up in time and the judges' fifty second penalty for missing gate six saw her crash out of the competition.

Japan's Yuriko Takeshita was the last women to qualify. The feisty athlete had to fight to extricate herself from the churning hole that held her in the "Dragon's Mouth" drop, and was rewarded for her determination as she just made the cut for the semi-finals.

Greek athlete Maria Ferekidi had to Eskimo roll after capsizing in the "Vortex" drop, and managed to preserve her place in the semi-finals. The Netherlands' Ariane Herde was also dumped in the same drop, and was forced to turn back to make gate 15, and was rewarded with her place on the list of fifteen women to advance to Thursdays semi-finals.






SUMMARY OF RESULTS**WOMENS K1 HEATS**

- 1.Elena Kaliska SVK 186.19
- 2.Jingjing Li CHN 187.56
- 3.Stepanka Hilgertova CZE 189.13
- 4.Jennifer Bongardt GER 198.37
- 5.Emilie Fer FRA 189.68
- 6.Violetta Oblinger Peters AUT 196.71
- 7.Jacqueline Lawrance AUS 200.13
- 8.Agnieszka Stauch POL 202.92
- 9.Maria Cristina Giai Pron ITA 203.70
- 10.Heather Corrie USA 211.31
- 11.Yekaterina Lukicheva KAZ 221.29
- 12.Maria Ferekidi GRE 221.97
- 13.Ariane Herde NED 222.28
- 14.Poliana De Paula BRA 224.19
- 15.Yuriko Takeshita JPN 224.71

DID NOT QUALIFY

- 16.Maialen Chourraut ESP 253.39
- 17.Fiona Pennie GBR 259.06
- 18.Aleksandra Perova RUS 259.45
- 19.Sarah Boudens CAN 268.67
- 20.Monserrat Garcia Riberaygua AND 268.93
- 21.Luuka Jones NZL 272.36

ENDS

<i>Photo</i>	<i>Caption</i>	<i>Photographer</i>	<i>Click to download the hi-res pic</i>
	Defending Olympic champion Elena Kaliska topped the results after the heats for the women's K1 Olympic slalom competition at the Shunyi Olympic Canoeing park on Wednesday.	Pic:Balint Vekassy / ICF	HERE
	Czech Republic superstar Stepanka Hilgertova proved that she is in the sort of form to challenge for a third Olympic gold medal during the heats for the women's K1 slalom competition.	Pic:Balint Vekassy/ ICF	HERE
	Heather Corrie of the USA qualified for the semi-finals of the women's K1 slalom competition at the Shunyi Olympic Canoeing Park.	Pic:Balint Vekassy/ ICF	HERE
	China's Jingjing Li in action during the heats of the women's K1 slalom competition at the Shunyi Olympic Canoeing Park.	Pic:Balint Vekassy/ ICF	HERE
	Kazakhstan's solitary Olympic canoeist Yekaterina Lukicheva qualifying for the semi-finals of the women's K1 competition.	Pic:Balint Vekassy/ ICF	HERE

For further images please contact Ana-Marija Garcevic at anamarija.garcevic@canoeicf.com

For any further information, or if you cannot access these images, please contact:

Dave Macleod

ICF Media Officer

dave@gameplanmedia.co.za

Mobile 086 135 22187252