

Three days into racing at the World Championships in Seu d'Urgell, Spain, and Canada is having one of its best ever.

The Women K1s and C2 raced valiantly on Thursday but finished out of the Semi-Finals. They all had some really strong performances and with minor adjustments will be knocking on the door soon. Jessica Groeneveld of Innisfail was the top woman in 43rd, while in C2 the Cutts brothers of Ottawa were 27th!

Friday saw the qualifiers for the C1 men, K1 men, and C1 women. The tone was set early by the Canadian C1's when veteran James Cartwright of Ottawa stormed down in 12th place in his first run and youngster Cam Smedley in 24th. The kayaks struggled in their first run, but then Cartwright again up the ante and improved to 10th place after two runs, proving that we (Canada) had it in us. In some of the most exciting racing i've seen, Ben Hayward of Edmonton, stormed down the course, followed two minutes later by Ottawa's John Hastings. The pair had great runs, Ben's being just 1.5 seconds ahead of John, and 2.3 out of second place. Ben finished 18th and advances to the finals on Sunday and John finished 31st. David Ford of Edmonton, 99 World Championship here in Seu d'Urgell had a difficult time and finished 52nd. In C1 women Cindy Audet of Montreal advanced to the Semi-Finals in the first ever C1 women category.

Saturday was the Team races and Canada was looking to keep on the roll from the day before. The Team race involves three competitors racing down the course together. The K1 women had a solid run with great weave, but penalties kept them from advancing from the finals. The Canadian Men, David Ford, John Hastings and Ben Hayward put together a solid run to advance to the final in 8th place. The final run started out well, until disaster struck and one of the camera booms hit Ben in gate 5 and through him offline. He scrambled to catch back up but there was little chance. Of course they were able to do a re-run but with only fifteen minutes rest it seemed like a tall task. All of the other nations had just finished and the Canadians sat in the start gate ready for the re-run, knowing they had been given a second chance. Each of them said afterwards, they were thinking 'maybe we can just do this'. They had a flying run, flawless to the drop. The British and Spanish in 2nd and 3rd knew the time that had to be achieved to the drop to be in contention. 79 seconds was the split when their last boat had gone over the drop. The last Canadian crossed in 77 seconds! Just the slightest brush of the gate in 18 added two seconds and cost a slight bit of time. They hammered to the finish with Hayward in full sprint mode and finish 4th! The best ever Canadian Team result and just .36 out of the bronze medal, and less than two seconds out of silver. It was great redemption for Ford and Hastings and added to the great results for the weekend for Hayward.

Sunday will see James Cartwright go for Gold in C1, Ben Hayward racing to win in K1 men, and Sindy Audet attempt to win in the first ever women's C1 World Championships.

Good luck to all! Results can be seen live at <http://www.123result.com/>

Off to watch Demo runs.

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