

Poznan played host for the first ICF World Cup of 2011, with over 400 athletes from 38 countries competing for gold across the three day event. The paddlers had to contend with heavy cross winds and 'Ice Laced water' over the event, but that didn't stop them from putting in some tremendous performances much to the joy of the spectators that lined the course.

There were some outstanding results from the Australian team with Western Australian paddler Alana Nicholls leading the way for her country leaving the event with two medals. The K1 500m final was dominated by German Nicole Reinhardt, however Nicholls dug deep and finished second in a result that she is thrilled with.

"I was surprised at how good i was feeling leading into the 500s taking into account that we only arrived into Europe on Wednesday. I was just happy to have made the A final in the 500m so to come out with silver is fantastic".

After a slow start out of the blocks in the K1 200m women's final, Nicholls had a strong middle section and powered to the finish, narrowly missing out on the silver medal by three tenths of a second to German, Nicole Reinhardt, with Poland's Marta Walczykiewicz leading from start to start finish in an emphatic gold medal winning performance from the local favourite.

The K4 500m women's team of Hailey McGinty, Naomi Flood, Hannah Davis and Rachel Lovell claimed a bronze medal on day two, finishing behind the powerful crews from Portugal and Belarus, with the latter claiming the gold medal.

McGinty and Lovell teamed up for the K2 200m final finishing fifth behind the dominant Austrian crew of Yvonne Schuring and Viktoria Schwarz who clearly won ahead of the Dutch team consisting of Femke Roos and Rowdy Eerde, with Serbian duo Nikolina and Olivera Moldovan rounding out the medals.

Jo Brigden-Jones returned to competitive racing following shoulder surgery finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in the K1 1000m final, while failing to make the final of the K1 200m, finishing a disappointing 7<sup>th</sup> B final. The former world cup medal winning will look to keep improving at each event in the lead up to the World Championships where she hopes to be performing at her best.

"I had 5 months out of the water and then some restrictions on my training since starting back paddling, so it's not the preparation I would want coming into the international season but it will just allow me to keep improving and hopefully by World Championships I will be back at my best".

Nothing separated the top two in the final of the men's K2 500m with Belarus claiming the gold ahead race favourite France with the locals, Poland rounding out the top three. Australian K2 paddlers Stephen Bird and Jesse Phillips went into the final confident of a strong performance, but would be disappointed with their final placing after winning their semi final the day before.

The WA pair finished eighth in the K2 200m final finishing 1.5 seconds behind the champion French crew of Arnaud Hybois and Sebastien Jouve, with Great Britain and Serbia finishing second, and third respectively.

Former Surf Life Saving champion Naomi Flood paired with fellow Aussie Alyce Burnett failed to

make the final of the women's K2 500m, and will now turn their attention to using the training camp in Munich to improve ahead of World Cup 2 in Racice.

"Floody and I paddled quite well together, but we still have a lot of things to improve on within our race which is a positive sign. I guess I am now looking forward to the training in Munich to work on the little things".

Burnett also finished fifth in the K1 1000m final, a place behind Brigden-Jones.

The women's K1 5000m final captivated the crowd, it what was a controversial final with the final result still to be announced. A source has Hailey McGinty winning a silver medal after she originally finished sixth on the time sheets; however a number of the girls cut the turning cans during the race. South Australia's Hannah Davis also competed in the K1 5000m with the final result to be announced in due course.

The Australian paddlers are set to depart Poznan, for Munich, where they will join the K1 1000 men's team who have been training in Austria, for an intensive training camp ahead of World Cup 2 commencing in Racice, Czech Republic on May 20.