

West Farleigh's Sam Wilson Crowned World Champion in Squirt Boating at ICF Freestyle World Championships



In a stunning display of skill and determination, Sam Wilson has claimed the title of World Champion in the men's squirt boat category at the International Canoe Federation (ICF) Canoe Freestyle World Championships, held in Plattling, Germany. Representing Great Britain, Sam not only took home the gold but also shattered the world record—three times over—on his path to victory, scoring 3246.67 points.

The event, often referred to as the "Olympics" of freestyle kayaking due to the sport's absence from the Olympic Games, brought together athletes from 40 countries across various categories. For the squirt boating community, this is the pinnacle of competition.

Sam qualified for the GB team during the national selections at Nottingham White Water Centre in October last year. From the outset of the world championships, he dominated the field—finishing first in the preliminaries with a record-breaking performance. He then surpassed his own record in the semi-finals and once again in the finals, securing the gold medal and the world title.

This victory marks a significant milestone in Sam's kayaking career. Now 28, he has been competing for Team GB in Men's K1, C1 and squirt since the age of 16. Some of his previous accolades include bronze medals at the 2016 World Championships in Plattling and the 2019 event in Sort, Spain, as well as titles as British and European Open Champion in both 2023 and 2024.



For those unfamiliar with squirt boating, it's a unique and technically demanding discipline. Athletes use a low-volume kayak—resembling a slalom boat with the air “sucked out”—to perform intricate tricks. Points are awarded based on the angles achieved and minimal paddle use. A key feature of the sport is the “mystery move,” where the paddler submerges both themselves and the boat underwater for as long as possible, multiplying their surface score. The unpredictability of where and when the paddler resurfaces adds to the thrill and spectacle.

When he's not travelling the world to compete or coach, Sam lives at St Helens Corner with his parents, Chris and Megan, who are extremely proud of all his achievements.



Beyond competition, Sam is a qualified kayak coach across all disciplines, teaching everyone from beginners to international-level athletes on both flat and white water. His passion for the sport and dedication to coaching have made him a respected figure in the paddling community. More information can be found on his website <https://samwilsoncoaching.wordpress.com/>

To witness Sam's incredible rides, simply search "Sam Wilson ICF world champion squirt boating" online.

