

More than a sports event - Jim Thorpe Sports Days celebrate fun, fitness, friendship

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Clausewitz is great – but what’s better than playing sports and partying afterward? Competition and camaraderie are the buzz words for the athletes, fans, families of the Jim Thorpe Sports Days.

Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, Commandant, USAWC, hoists the Commanders Cup trophy during a pep rally held in Bliss Hall March 30. The Army War College has won Jim Thorpe Sports Days every year since 2005. Photo by Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos.

The 36th annual Jim Thorpe Sports Days, April 14-16, gathers 420 athletes from the nation’s senior military colleges --150 from the Air War College, 65 from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, 60 from the National War College, and 143 from the Army War College to include 32 volunteers – in a test of competitive team spirit and personal fitness.



"Being in the military is like being on a sports team – we're all athletes, our leaders are our coaches, and we work as a team," said Commandant Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin as he reminded the athletes to follow APFRI guidelines: "Stretch, then crush the competition."

The opening ceremony is Friday, April 15 at 1 p.m. on Carlisle Barracks' historic Indian Field, where Jim Thorpe and others once displayed the teamwork, discipline

and physical fitness that inspires the athletic games at Carlisle. Special guests this year will include Jim Thorpe's grandson, John Thorpe, and George Yuda, from Carlisle, whose dad Montreville 'Speed' Yuda played baseball with Jim Thorpe's. Both men have brought good fortune to the team for several years, and this year they will present the overall trophy, the coveted Commandants Cup.

The colorful ceremony will include the Joint Service Color Guard from the 3rd Infantry Regiment in Washington, D.C.; music from the West Point band; a 13-gun salute from the 108th Field Artillery Battalion of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard; an Olympic-style walk-on with the athletes of every school; the National Anthem sung by Rebecca Aclin, daughter of Professor John Aclin; DNSS, Flyover-C-5 Galaxy from the 326th Airlift Squadron, 512th Airlift Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Del.; Welcome remarks by USAWC Commandant Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, a torch relay lap around the track, and lighting of the cauldron.

In commemoration of Civil War 150, three cavalrymen from the 1st Pa. Volunteer Cavalry Detachment will deliver batons for the relay race.

Play

Immediately following the torch lighting, the men's two-mile relay and the women's one-mile relay team competition on the Indian Field track will begin. The competition schedule starts the previous afternoon, Thursday, for softball, basketball and soccer.



Members of the men's running team practice for Jim Thorpe Sports Day during their lunch break. The men's running team is the defending

champion of the 5K relay event. Photo by Thomas Zimmerman.

All of this year's sports events and opening ceremony are free and open to the public. Sports events include the women's one-mile relay and 5K run, men's two-mile relay and five-mile run, men's and women's bowling and golf, racquetball, cycling, soccer, trap and skeet, softball, basketball, volleyball and tennis. Check out the schedules and maps -- Monitor facebook for updates and scores throughout the games at www.facebook.com/usawc (<http://www.facebook.com/usawc>)

/HomePage.htm (<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/dmspo/JTSD/AY11/JimThorpe/HomePage.htm>)

Learn

The games are a prime link for visiting schools to the famous Army Physical Fitness Research Institute. Back by popular demand, APFRI has scheduled its 3rd annual Jim Thorpe Health & Fitness Symposium, April 14 from 8 to 10:30 a.m. in Bliss Hall.

APFRI is the nexus of leadership, health and fitness – and shares current insights about enhancing the performance of the athlete. Two topics will be relevant to officers, guests and families long after Army wins the cup: **Durable Athletic Performance & Military Physical Training**, offered by Robert Stanley, the APFRI executive fitness program health fitness instructor, and **Fueling for Performance & Health** with Nancy Clark.

Meet a few of the USAWC Class of 2011 Athletes

Participating in three events **Lt. Col. Mark Deschenes**, an Army Engineer, believes that you have to have a competitive spirit to do this. "The opportunities don't present themselves as frequently as when we were younger officers," he said. "It's a great way to stay in shape. Team sports are a great way to motivate you and have fun." Deschenes is participating in soccer, the 800-meter relay and 5-mile run, and cycling. His favorite sport is soccer which he played in high school and then played rugby in college. "Soccer combines so many different things--it's a team sport and much more competitive than cycling or running where you are on your own competing against the clock," he said. Deschenes feels that JTSD fosters competitiveness between the senior service colleges, along with friendship and social connections.

Basketball teammates **Lt. Col. Sam Cook**, U.S. Marine and **Lt. Col. Troy Molendyke**, U.S. Air Force, have been practicing since November, playing on intramural teams and the Carlisle Barracks' team. Sam and I play well together," said Molendyke. "As a very well coached player, Sam knows what to do." Cook played basketball at the Naval Academy and in high school.

In fact, the Carlisle Barracks Command Sergeant Major Robert Blakey and Lt. Col. Cook played against each other on arch rival high school teams in Virginia. "It was quite a good shock to see him again after over 20 years since we had played each other," said Cook.

Molendyke played basketball at the Air Force Academy and in high school in Oregon where he was player of the year. In 2000 Molendyke was the U.S. Air Forces in Europe Male Athlete of the Year. He also played semi-pro basketball in the Netherlands.

"Troy is remarkable," said Cook. "He changed high schools three or four times and made the team every time."

Both men agreed that the Army Physical Fitness Research Institute played an important part in their conditioning. "APFRI helped me to achieve my goal," said Cook. "The personal trainer designed a work out program for me for general fitness and to help maintain and increase stamina." "APFRI refocused me on eating better and taking better care of myself," said Molendyke.

They both feel the Army War College has an excellent chance to win, and they want everyone to come out and support the team.

Enjoy

Jim Thorpe Sports Days is a family event; geo-bachelors will find this the perfect weekend for a family visit. Plenty of kid-friendly activities will serve as reminder that **April is the Month of the Military Child**. Family and MWR Services here many activities such as bouncy house, face painting, crafts and pony rides to channel the kids' energy and enthusiasm. The activities will be offered on April 15 from 2 to 6 p.m. at the field across from the Tiki Bar.

The place to be after the sports days will be the **Tiki Bar**, located behind the LeTort View Community Center, next to the pool. On April 15, the Tiki Bar will hold its grand re-opening for the season with a party. The band, "Second Time Thru" will provide live music for the event which runs from 4-10 p.m.

Two popular traditions of the Jim Thorpe Sports Days will welcome the whole community: the buffet dinner April 15 which starts at 6 p.m. at the LVCC, and the Closing Ceremonies Bar-B-Que on April

16 starting at noon on Indian Field. Tickets for each event are \$12 in advance and \$14 at the door. Tickets for children age 6-15 are \$6; children under 5 eat for free. Buy tickets in advance at the Joint Deli in Root Hall, the Root Hall Gym Sports Office and at the Thorpe Hall Gym Desk.

The Carlisle Barracks Child Development Center is offering Parents' Night Out child care on April 15 from 6 to 11 p.m. The cost is \$30 for the first child and \$20 for each additional child. Payments must be made at the time of registration, and registration is due by April 8. You must be a registered CYSS member to participate in this program.