

US Army War College students win Jim Thorpe Sports days

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Crowd cheers at closing ceremonies as US Army War College receive Jim Thorpe Sports Days trophy, April 30.



Col. Whitney Jensen, an USAWC student, and her twin sister Lt. Col. Asheleigh Gellner, a Navy War College student, competed together in the 5k race during Jim Thorpe Sports Days, April 30.



A member of the Army JTSD functional fitness team shakes hand with JTSD functional fitness team member from the Navy in Jim Thorpe Gym, April 28.

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Today concluded the Jim Thorpe Sports Days, as five service schools competed for the gold, April 30.

There were team events champions and an overall winner. Air Force won soccer, bowling, golf, and volleyball. Army won softball, skeet and trap, basketball, one mile relay (men and women) and functional fitness. USAWC students won the overall competition, keeping the Jim Thorpe trophy at home.

Although winning is rewarding, students took away much more.

"It is exciting, especially for me as an Air Force guy at the Army War College playing against my Air Force brethren, it makes it that much sweeter. It really shows our jointness. Jim Thorpe Sports Days brings together all the war colleges which is how we operate when we are on the battlefield," said USAWC Lt. Col. Jerome Rogers.

Army Col. Whitney Jensen, an USAWC student, and her twin sister, a Naval War College student, competed together in the 5k race. "We have done a lot of events together but having this shared war college experience of competing while representing our services and military schools was a great end to a great year," said Army National Guard Lt. Col. Asheleigh Gellner.

"The thing that I think is neat about Jim Thorpe Sports Days is the number of team sports. The collaboration and cooperation that comes from all the team environments is the real shining star. It is awesome to be able to come out here and have a friendly competition with all the international partners that we're used to being with on the battlefield," said Air War College student Christopher Michele.

After a two-year hiatus, the Army War College hosted the Jim Thorpe Sports Days. While Covid-19 may have disrupted the past two years of this annual event, participants were excited to get back in the games.

"I am just excited to be back and playing sports again," said USAWC student Air Force Lt. Col. Joseph Sundy about participating in this year's JTSD event.

The Games opened with special guest Brig. Gen. Joane Mathews, Deputy Adjutant General for the Wisconsin National Guard. A 2011 graduate of the Army War College, she was a member of the winning Jim Thorpe running team in 2011. As a Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe woman, she helped celebrate Jim Thorpe's legacy of fitness, discipline and teamwork, all of which were exemplified during the JTSD events.

Mathews participated in the opening ceremony at the grandstand at Carlisle Barracks` Thursday, April 28 at 5 p.m. She was joined by Maj. Gen. David Hill, U.S. Army War College Commandant, and leaders from each service school. The events concluded on Saturday, April 30,

The opening ceremony featured the ROTC color guard from Cumberland Valley High School, an Olympic-style walk-on with the athletes of every

school, a torch relay lap around the track, and the lighting of the caudron. The men's and women's one-mile relay team competition on the Indian Field track followed the torch lighting.

Four other senior Service schools were in competition with the Army War College: Air War College, Naval War College, National Defense University, and the Eisenhower School of National Security. They competed in various sports: running, cycling, basketball, soccer, skeet/ trap shooting, golf, tennis, volleyball, bowling, softball – and functional fitness. USAWC won the most sporting events, receiving the Commandant's Cup.

This was the 41st inter-service school JTSD games, an event named for the famous athlete Jim Thorpe. Jim Thorpe was a Native American Olympian, professional athlete, and arguably the most outstanding American athlete of all time. Thorpe was a student of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School -- a Bureau of Indian Affairs institution on the grounds of Carlisle Barracks from 1879 to 1918.