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WFDF 2016 World Ultimate and Guts Championship Concludes with Team USA Sweep of the Gold Medals

The WFDF 2016 World Ultimate and Guts Championship was concluded with three featured gold medal games on Saturday 26 June at the Allianz Park stadium in London. Team USA swept gold by winning in each of finals of the mixed gender, women's, and men's divisions before a capacity crowd of nearly 10,000. The finals of the Men's Masters, Women's Masters, and Guts Frisbee championships had been held Friday and, together with preliminary and play-off rounds, were held at the University College London (UCL) Sports Ground in London Colney. More than 3,000 athletes competed in the event, representing 115 Ultimate teams and 8 Guts teams from 39 countries.

Saturday's championship Ultimate action capped the weeklong event, which began Sunday 19 June. In the mixed division, Team USA defeated Australia 15-6. In the women's division, the experienced USA squad easily handled the young team from Colombia 17-7. In the Men's division, the USA defeated Japan 15-11 in a game featuring very few turnovers. The awards for best spirit, voted by each team's opponents, were awarded to the mixed team from Finland, the women's team from India, and the men's team from New Zealand.



Japanese player outjumps USA defender in men's final.
Team USA defeated Japan 15-11. Credit: Neil Gardner

"It's been a successful week of disc sports and it was great to see so many countries participate with competitive and spirited teams," stated WFDF President Robert "Nob" Rauch. "The gold medal sweep by the USA is the first since 1994 in World Championship play and is a testament to the quality and depth of the USA program, but we are pleased to see an up and coming team like Colombia break into the elite levels, while welcoming new participants like Egypt. We also were excited to be able to put on our most extensive video programming, with a two hour telecast on CBS Sports Network in North America on Saturday and with 39 livestreamed games with professional commentary throughout the week. With the quality of the play and the programming, we are confident about the prospects for identifying our first global brand sponsor shortly."

Video Telecasts

There was a two hour delayed telecast of the Ultimate gold medal games in North America on Saturday 25 June on CBS Sports Network.

In addition, a total of 37 Ultimate and 2 Guts games were livestreamed throughout the week. The game streams are available at <http://livestream.com>, at <http://wdf.org/live>, the WFDF Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/worldflyingdisc>, WFDF's youtube channel at www.youtube.com/wdfchannel, and the World Games channel at <http://channel.theworldgames.org/>.

Summary Medal Standings

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Spirit
Mixed	USA	Australia	Canada	Finland
Women's	USA	Colombia	Canada	India
Men's	USA	Japan	Australia	New Zealand
Women's Masters	USA	Canada	Australia	New Zealand
Men's Masters	USA	Canada	Great Britain	New Zealand
Guts Frisbee	USA	Japan	Great Britain	USA

Team USA ended up with 7 medals, (including being voted in the Guts Frisbee division as the best spirited team by its peers while also winning gold). Canada came in second with 4 medals, Australia and New Zealand tied for third with 3 (with New Zealand's all coming for spirit), host Great Britain and Japan tied for fifth with 2, and Colombia, Finland, and India at 1.



Australian player outruns USA defender in mixed division final. Credit: Jolie J. Lang

Background

Competition this week was held in five divisions: mixed gender (30 teams), men's (31), women's (26), men's masters (17), and women's masters (11). In addition, there were 8 teams competing in the discipline of Guts Frisbee.

A total of 39 countries competed in the 2016 WUGC. These are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, People's Republic of China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Spain, Finland, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hong Kong China, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, and USA.

This year's event represents the 14th edition of the World Ultimate and Guts Championships. The first event was hosted in 1983 in Gothenburg Sweden and is now held on a quadrennial basis.

What is Ultimate?

Ultimate is a non-contact, self-refereed team sport played with a flying disc (aka a Frisbee). Two teams of seven players compete on a playing field about the same length as an American football field, but narrower. At each end of the playing field there is an end zone. Each team defends one end zone. They score a goal if one of their players catches the disc in the opposite end zone. The player with the disc is called the thrower. The thrower may not run with the disc. Instead they move the disc by passing to teammates in any direction. The defensive team gets possession of the disc if an offensive team's throw is not caught by a player of the same team. Then the defensive team becomes the offensive team and can try to score in the opposite end zone. A key element of the game is that there are no referees and players make their own calls on the field, under a code known as "spirit of the game."



USA vs Colombia in the women's division final. Credit: Neil Gardner

What is Guts Frisbee?

Guts is played by two teams of five players each. The playing field consists of two parallel goal-lines 15 m in length and 14 m apart. The teams stand in line opposite each other. Each team defends a goal-line. The disc is thrown back and forth between the teams. The object is to throw the disc through the line of defending players. The throwing team scores a point when the other team does not catch a correctly thrown disc. The receiving team scores a point when the disc is not thrown correctly. When a correctly thrown disc is caught by the other team, no points are scored. The team that first reaches 21 points wins the game.

About WFDF:

The World Flying Disc Federation ("WFDF") serves as the international governing body of all flying disc (frisbee) sports. WFDF is made up of the National Associations ("Members") that govern their respective disc sports in over 65 countries. WFDF is the International Federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for Flying Disc sports, a member of the Association of Recognised International Federations (ARISF), a member of SportAccord and the International World Games Association, is recognized as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) registered corporation in the State of Colorado, USA, and it is a signatory of the World Anti-Doping Agency code. WFDF estimates that over 7.5 million people globally play disc sports competitively.

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