

## Zagunis Wins Gold, US Women Sweep

Contributed by Craig Harkins  
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(Sada Jacobson, Mariel Zagunis, and Becca Ward share the podium. Photo courtesy FencingPhotos.com)

Mariel Zagunis reclaimed the gold medal in a repeat of her 2004 performance. Zagunis defeated teammate Sada Jacobson 15-8 to claim the gold medal. The US women completed an historic sweep of the medals as teammate Rebecca Ward earlier won the bronze medal match.

Zagunis controlled her bout from the outset using a variety of stutter-step attacks and quick ripostes that took Jacobson out of her comfort zone. Several times in the bout, Sada worked to close the gap, but we never able to get closer than 2 points from her teammate.

Zagunis had already defeated one teammate when she faced fellow Oregon Fencing Alliance club mate Becca Ward, defeating her 15-11. It was another example of Zagunis fencing up to the challenge of the day and taking control of the match when she needed to. After the bout, Zagunis characterized her bout with Becca as "the most difficult I've ever fenced."

Seeded 6th into the tournament, Zagunis had a close match in the round of 16 against Poland's Bogna Jozwiak but prevailed 15-13. She would take control of her next bout against China's Ying Ying Bao. Bao came out of the top half of Mariel's bracket after world champion Nechaeva (RUS) floundered in her first bout.

In a day that saw a large number of upsets, the US women held strong and keep their positions safe throughout the tournament. When it was time to pit teammate against teammate, medals were assured.

Mariel Zagunis has lived for fencing for the past few years. Her hard work and determination paid off in a second gold medal for the United States.

Former US President George Bush was on hand to view the US victory and offer congratulations to the US team.

Photo: George Bush and Rene Roch, President of the FIE, congratulate the US women's sabre fencers. Courtesy Serge Timacheff, FencingPhotos.com