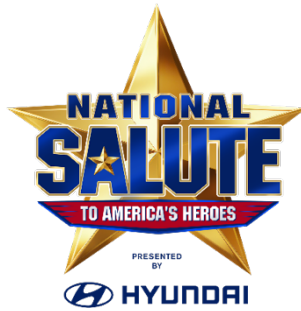




**NFL LEGEND JIMMY GRAHAM TO FLY WITH U.S. AIR FORCE THUNDERBIRDS IN
SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL SALUTE TO AMERICA'S HEROES,
PRESENTED BY HYUNDAI**

*Six-Time Pro Bowl Tight End Will Ride with the Thunderbirds as Part of the U.S. Air Force's
'Hometown Heroes' Program.*

Click [here](#) for the 2026 Promotional Video

MIAMI BEACH (May 19, 2026) – A National Salute to America's Heroes, presented By Hyundai, and the United States Air Force's air demonstration squadron announced today that **former NFL tight end Jimmy Graham** will serve as a civilian passenger in the backseat of a Thunderbirds F-16 Fighting Falcon in support of the Hyundai Air & Sea Show®, "the Greatest Show Above the Earth®," on Friday, May 22, as part of the Air Force's 'Hometown Heroes' program. He will fly with Major Samuel "RaZZ" Larson, Thunderbird 8 and an experienced fighter pilot, during a practice flight on May 22 ahead of the show's public performances on Saturday, May 23 and Sunday, May 24 at Miami Beach.

A six-time Pro Bowl selection, Graham is one of the most decorated tight ends in NFL history. During his 13-season career, he recorded 718 receptions for 8,978 yards and 88 touchdowns across stints with the New Orleans Saints, Seattle Seahawks, Green Bay Packers, and Chicago Bears. Known for his exceptional athleticism, Graham played college basketball at the University of Miami, where he earned his way onto the football team as a walk-on, and went on to become one of the most physically gifted and dominant tight ends the league has ever seen. His deep ties to South Florida make him the ideal hometown hero to represent the spirit of this year's show.

Graham's commitment to service extends far beyond the field. A licensed pilot, Graham used his NFL off days to fly wounded warriors in his seaplane, a personal mission that reflected his deep respect for those who serve. In 2014, he spent a week in Afghanistan to build personal bonds with deployed troops. In 2020, he partnered with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors to virtually surprise families of fallen service members during the pandemic. He has flown numerous Purple Heart recipients, including a Vietnam veteran pilot who had not seen a helicopter since losing his leg in combat, an experience Graham describes as "priceless." Most recently, the Jimmy Graham Foundation partnered with the 5th Annual Operation 300 Frogman Shoot to raise critical funds for Gold Star families.

The 2026 Hyundai Air & Sea Show® returns to Miami Beach for Memorial Day Weekend, honoring and celebrating the men and women of the United States Military and commemorating 250 years

of defending American freedom as part of the America250 celebration. This year's free-to-the-public event features demonstrations by the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Demo Team, U.S. Army Golden Knights parachute team, a B-2 Bomber flyover, and much more along Ocean Drive from 11:30 AM to 4:30 PM both days. Saturday evening features U.S. Air Force SaluteFest, a free patriotic concert headlined by country group Parmalee, a 1,000-drone light show, 3D projection mapping, and a fireworks finale.

"Jimmy Graham is the ultimate hometown hero, a South Florida legend whose athleticism, charisma, and deep connection to this community make him the perfect ambassador for this experience," said **Mickey Markoff, Executive Producer of A National Salute to America's Heroes**. "Seeing him take flight with the Thunderbirds ahead of Memorial Day Weekend is a powerful symbol of what the Hyundai Air & Sea Show® is all about: paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom and inspiring the next generation to carry that legacy forward."

The Hyundai Air & Sea Show® will be **livestreamed at 11:30am – 4:30pm on Saturday, May 23, exclusively on [Fox Nation](#)**, providing real-time audio and video coverage with professional commentary, interviews, and behind-the-scenes access. Viewers can tune in worldwide at [USASalute.com](#)

On Sunday, the Hyundai Air & Sea Show® will be livestreamed from 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on [USASalute.com](#).

For more information, please visit: [www.USASalute.com](#) to experience the action as it unfolds, schedule, and for official event merchandise.

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U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds: The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds are an elite 135-member team representing 31 different career fields and performing at more than 30 locations each year in their signature red, white, and blue F-16s to showcase the precision, professionalism, and global readiness of the U.S. Air Force while inspiring the next generation.

A National Salute to America's Heroes, presented by Hyundai: The Hyundai Air & Sea Show® is the signature event of A National Salute to America's Heroes, presented by Hyundai — a national two-day celebration held in Miami Beach, Florida. Held Memorial Day Weekend, the Hyundai Air & Sea Show® focuses on honoring and paying tribute to the military, who protect the freedoms of all Americans. For more information and to view the promotional video, please visit [www.USASalute.com](#).

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