



NEWS

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Bradley Holtz named Athlete of the Month for December

BOSTON – **Bradley Holtz**, a senior at Barrington (RI) High School, has been named USA Track & Field New England's Athlete of the Month for December 2004. Competing in the pole vault at the New Haven Invitational on December 18, Holtz cleared 15'9", which not only broke the New England scholastic indoor record of 15'1 ¾" set in 1999, but also topped the best outdoor mark of 15'8". Following his record-breaking effort, Holtz spoke of feeling honored: "Being part of the small group of people who can say they've been among the best high school vaulters in New England history is an amazing feeling. I love pole vaulting and the challenges it provides." At the beginning of January, his jump remained the best scholastic vault in the nation for the current indoor season. Holtz has committed to attend the University of Tennessee and will enroll as a freshman next September.

In other outstanding performances, three New England athletes placed well at national championship cross-country races:

On December 11, at the National Junior Olympic Championships in Schaumburg, IL, **Erin Lagasse** of Cranston RI, competing for the Sentinel Striders, ran to a 3rd place finish in the Intermediate Girls division (age 15-16). Lagasse won her bronze medal with a time of 18:23.9 over the 5K course, finishing 16 seconds behind the winner. Also at the National Junior Olympic Cross-country Championships, the Nashua, NH **Police Athletic League** finished 2nd out of 28 teams to earn a silver medal in the Youth Boys division (age 13-14).

Chris Barnicle, a senior at Newton (MA) North High School finished 6th at the Footlocker Cross-Country Championships in San Diego on December 11, covering the 5K course in 15:34, 12 seconds off the winning time. Barnicle was selected as USATF – New England's Athlete of the Month last May when he set a New England scholastic record for two miles.

At the USATF National Club Cross-Country Championships in Portland, Oregon on December 4, **Jason Bialka**, representing the BAA, finished 7th in a strong field, running 33:23.63 for the rugged 10K course. Bialka was the 2nd finisher among club affiliated athletes and lead the BAA to a 9th place team finish.

Athlete of the Month

is a program for USATF- New England and is designed to recognize outstanding performers at all levels of the sport. USATF-NE will name a new honoree each month and feature the athlete on the USATF-NE website.

USATF-New England provides opportunities for athletes of all ages to pursue excellence in long distance running, race walking, and track and field, from grassroots to the elite level.

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