



Jen Toomey named USATF-New England Athlete of the Month for February



Photo: Robert E. Klein, Boston Globe

BOSTON – **Jen Toomey** of Salem, MA has been named USA Track & Field New England's Athlete of the Month for February 2005. Toomey, running her first race since August 2004, successfully defended her title in the 1500m at the USA Indoor Track & Field Championships on February 26 at the Reggie Lewis track in Roxbury, MA. She took the lead at mid-race, picked up the pace during the second half, then sprinted strongly on the last lap to win in 4:13.25.

When asked how it felt to enter her first race in six months at the national championships, Toomey was quick to credit her coach, **Tom McDermott**. "If Tom wasn't my coach, I wouldn't have attempted this," she said. "He helps me feel more courageous and to want to be the best I can be all the time – even if I don't feel as ready as I'd like. I knew that no matter what happened, that I'd get something out of the race."

Toomey indicated that her next race will be an 800m at the Drake Relays in Des Moines, IA, in April. She emphasized the importance, in her plans, of the 1500m at the Prefontaine Classic in Eugene, OR in

June, where she hopes to get a qualifying time for the World Championships in Athletics to be held in Helsinki, Finland in August. Asked if she is focusing on the 1500 more than the 800 this year, Toomey hesitated before answering; "I *will* focus on the 1500...but I feel I have unfinished business in the 800, I think I can still accomplish something there."

A number of New England athletes medaled or placed well at the USA Indoor Championships. These included **Joanne Dow** of Manchester, NH, 2nd in the women's 3000m race walk in 13:09.62, **Amy Rudolph** of Providence, RI, 2nd in the 3000m in 8:57.42, **Amy Mortimer** of West Roxbury, MA, 4th in the 3000m in 9:15.58, **Jake Freeman** of East Greenwich, RI, 2nd in the weight throw at 76'0", **Chris Bryce** of Waltham, MA, 6th in the weight throw at 64'1.75", **Joel Legare** of Holden, MA, who is red shirting this season at UConn, 3rd in the 800 in 1:48.86, and **Kristal Kostiew** of VT, 6th in the weight throw at 62'4". Also former Brookline (MA) H.S. star, **Jonathan Riley**, who now lives in California, won the 3000m for the third straight year, timing 7:53.73 and former Dartmouth College star and two-time Olympic silver medallist, **Adam Nelson** of Athens, GA, placed 3rd in the shot put with a superb throw of 70' 10"

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.