

Derek Anderson Named USA Track & Field - New England Athlete of the Month for April



Photo: www.trackandfieldphoto.net

BOSTON – Derek Anderson, age 22, a graduating senior at Northeastern University has been named USA Track & Field New England's Athlete of the Month for April 2006. Competing at the Texas Relays in Austin, TX on April 7-8, Anderson won the shot put with a mighty heave of 65' 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19.88m), beating a deep field that included defending NCAA champion Garrett Johnson of Florida State. In the discus he came in 3rd with a throw of 194'5" (59.27m). Both marks were personal bests and new school records. The following week, on April 15, at Northeastern's Husky Invitational at the Solomon track in Dedham, MA, Anderson extended his PR in the discus with a toss of 197'3" (60.13m).

Anderson grew up in Wrentham, MA and attended Xaverian Brothers High School in Westwood, MA

where he won multiple state championships in the shot put and discus. He was named school MVP in football as well as in track and played on the Division 1 High School Super Bowl Championship football team in 1998. Asked about his recent record performances, Anderson said that he had focused on the Texas Relays for several months, anticipating that the strong competitive field he would face along with the enthusiastic crowd that traditionally fills the stands, would help him bring out his best. He talked of getting more used to performing at a high level in pressure situations, and of learning to thrive on the pressure.

Reflecting on his athletic goals for the future, Anderson was thoughtful and articulate. "Our sport is very numbers oriented," he observed. "People often ask me if I think I can hit certain milestones like throwing 70 feet in the future. But I try not to think about the numbers too much. To me a goal is more about pushing yourself beyond what you thought you could do – really pushing yourself to the limit. If that brings me a particular number or gets me to the Olympics in the future, that would be great, but I'm not going to focus too much energy thinking that way."

Also excelling in April were three former USATF-New England Athlete of the Month (AOM) winners. At the Texas Relays, Laura Gerraughty of Nashua, NH (AOM in July 2004), competing for the University of North Carolina, won the women's shot put with a throw of 60'1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (18.58m). At the BAA Boston Marathon on April 17, Emily Levan of Wiscasset, ME (AOM for August 2005), who runs for the BAA, was first American and 13th overall in the women's division with a PR of 2:37:01 and the Whirlaway men's Masters Racing Team (AOM for their Boston Marathon victory in April 2005) won their division for the 4th straight year as Paul Hammond, Chris Spinney and Jim Quadros clocked 7:58:51.

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