

Rebecca Donaghue Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for December



Photo: Michael Scott

BOSTON – **Rebecca Donaghue**, age 32 of State College, PA, who competes for New Balance Boston, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for December 2008. On December 13, at the USATF National Club Cross Country Championships in Spokane, WA, Donaghue won the open women’s 6 km race. Rebecca completed the course in 21:38 in cold, windy conditions on the day after a snowstorm. This was Rebecca’s first national championship and she led the New Balance Boston’s women’s team to a second place finish.

Donaghue described the conditions in Spokane as “the worst I’ve raced in,” saying that there were strong, frigid headwinds for a significant portion of the course. At one point, while leading the race, the wind actually toppled her. She lost her lead, but got up and managed to regroup and work her way back into first place.

Donaghue grew up in Stow, MA and attended Nashoba Regional High School. She is a 1998 graduate of UMass-Amherst where she won ten Atlantic-10 titles and set numerous school records. Following graduation, she ran for the Reebok Boston team that eventually became the New Balance Boston team. For several years, Rebecca has attended Penn State on a part-time basis, pursuing a masters degree in art education and coaching cross country and track at State College Area High School. This

arrangement has given her time to pursue her training and racing. She expects to return to New England following graduation.

Although a badly fractured wrist (“shattered”, says Rebecca) in March sidelined her for several weeks, 2008 was a year of outstanding accomplishments for Donaghue. At the USATF - New England Championships at Bentley College in June, she qualified for the Olympic Track & Field Trials in the 5000 meters by running a personal best (PB) of 15:55. At the Trials in Eugene, OR, Donaghue qualified for the finals with another PB of 15:38, then placed 8th in the finals with still another PB of 15:35. Donaghue was also the first American at the Beach to Beacon 10 K at Cape Elizabeth, ME in August, was 5th at the USA 5 K Championships in Providence in September, and was 4th American at the USA 10 K Championships in Boston (Tufts 10 K) on October 13.

Entering 2009, Donaghue’s immediate goals are to qualify for the 3000m for the USA Indoor Champs in Boston, and to qualify for the IAAF world Cross Country Championships by placing in the top six at the U.S. trials in Derwood, MD in February. She also wants to lower her track PBs during the outdoor season. Noting that she has continued to improve in recent years, Rebecca’s longer term goal is to make the US Olympic Team for 2012.

USATF – New England’s mission is to continue its leadership role as one of the outstanding associations of the national governing body in Athletics.

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