

## Joan Bohlke Named USATF – New England Athlete of the Month for January



*Photo by Daniel Grossman*

BOSTON – **Joan Bohlke**, age 29 of Framingham, MA, who competes for New Balance Boston, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for January 2008. On January 25 at the Terrier Invitational held at Boston University, Bohlke won the women’s 800 meter run in 2:07.14 over a field of 58 runners. Bohlke’s time was her fastest ever indoors or outdoors, and also qualified her for the USA Indoor Track & Field Championships that will be held in Boston February 23-24.

The previous week at the Greater Boston Track Club (GBTC) Invitational meet held at Harvard University on January 20, Bohlke had set a new personal best of 2:08.52 in the 800 meters, finishing second behind **Jen Toomey** of Salem, MA, who runs for Nike and has won several U.S. indoor championships events. Bohlke felt that the GBTC race was a breakthrough for her. She knew that she had energy left at the finish and was determined to run even faster at the Terrier Invitational. At B.U. she made sure she got out fast and ran relatively even splits, kicking the last 200 meter lap to move from 2<sup>nd</sup> into 1<sup>st</sup> place.

Looking at her recent improvement after several years of running at a plateau, Joan noted that her training plan has not differed from the past, but that she has been injury free since late summer therefore has been able to train with greater consistency. Just as significantly, she stated that she had been suffering from a chronic iron deficiency that was finally diagnosed as a bacterial infection last summer and treated successfully. Since then, she has felt stronger and her recent breakthrough times have demonstrated her improved racing fitness.

Bohlke works for the UMass Medical School and the Mass. Department of Public Health as a health professional workforce analyst. She believes that, as a health specialist, she has a special obligation to strive for health and fitness, and notes that her work colleagues have been very supportive of her training and racing. Bohlke hopes for continued improvement at the USA indoor championships. Looking toward the outdoor season, she hopes to qualify for the USA Olympic Track & Field Trials that will be held in Eugene, Oregon at the end of June. She believes that she will probably have to run 2:05 in the 800 to secure a place at the trials. She intends to let her running take her as far as she can go, noting that with her recent improvement, she has found it important to adjust her thought process to support the belief that she is not limited by past performances, but is capable of surpassing them.

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