

## Dwight Barbiasz Named USA Track & Field – New England Athlete of the Month for June



*Photo: prettysporty.com*

BOSTON – **Dwight Barbiasz**, age 17 of Milford (NH) High School, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for June. In a span of just three weeks, Barbiasz broke through to national prominence as a high school high jumper.

On May 31 at the New Hampshire Class I Championships at Pennacook H.S., Dwight became the first New Hampshire high school boy to clear 7 feet. Once the other HJ competitors were done, Dwight had the bar raised first to 6-10, then to 7 feet. The meet actually came to a stop so that everyone – including athletes, coaches and officials – could watch the high jump. Barbiasz indicated that he cooled down while the officials made preparations for the record attempt. Consequently, he was not close on his first attempt and nicked the bar with his lower

leg on the second attempt. However, his confidence was flowing and he made the adjustment and cleared smoothly on his last try.

A week later, on June 7, at the New Hampshire Meet of Champions held at UNH, Barbiasz again broke the state high jump record, clearing 7-1. He took three jumps at 7-2, barely missing on two of them.

Dwight then took on a very difficult challenge, jumping at the National Scholastic Outdoor meet (also known as the “Nike Outdoor Nationals”) in Greensboro, NC, on Friday and Saturday, June 20-21, then flying to Columbus, OH on Sunday, June 22 to compete in the USA Junior Track & Field Championships held at Ohio State. At Greensboro, Barbiasz prevailed over a very strong field, winning the high jump at 7-1. He then had the bar raised to 7-3 ¼, in an effort to achieve the best scholastic jump in the U.S. this year. He failed to clear, but was so close on his 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt, that the official at the bar told him he would have cleared at 7-3.

Barbiasz flew to Ohio the next day, but his schedule proved too tight for sufficient warm-up. Landing at 12 p.m., he reached the hotel at 1 p.m. and rushed to the track, where the high jump started at 3 p.m. Dwight managed to jump 6-11, which was good for 4<sup>th</sup> place. The top two in each event qualified for the IAAF World Junior Championships in Bydgoszcz, Poland in July.

Barbiasz will attend the University of Maryland this fall. Given his meteoric rise, it is worth noting that he has had a chronic left knee injury this year (he takes off on his left foot) and was unable to attend a single outdoor practice session! Instead, he did resistance running in a pool, then showed up for meets. He has also not had the benefit of a consistent weight-training program or advanced technique training.

A true diamond in the rough, Dwight Barbiasz hopes to make the U.S. Olympic Team for the 2012 London Olympic Games. Before then, he has set a goal of winning four consecutive ECAC high jump titles and of winning the NCAA Division I high jump by his junior or senior year. With development and hard work, all of these goals appear possible.