

Jack Collopy Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for November



Photo: Justin Platt

BOSTON – **Jack Collopy**, age 14 of Durham, NH, who runs for the Granite State Flash, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for November 2008. On November 23, at the Region I Junior Olympic Cross Country championships held at Van Cortlandt Park in New York City, Collopy won the 4 km Youth Boys race. His winning time was 13:27.26 and he led the Granite State Flash to the team title. Granite State’s “B” team finished in 2nd place, qualifying both Boys Youth squads for the national championships to be held in Mechanicsville, VA the second week of December.

On November 16, Jack won the New England Association Junior Olympic Cross Country championships Youth Boys race in 13:06 for the 4 km course. He led the Granite State Flash to a sweep of the first five places in their divisional race. Collopy, who is one of triplets and has five siblings overall, is a freshman at Oyster River High School in Durham. In October, he ran the fastest 5 km ever (16:11) for a New Hampshire freshman on the challenging Hanover course. The next week, at the State Meet of Champions, he was 13th overall, with a PR of 15:57 on a flat and fast course in Nashua.

Mike Merra, the Granite State Flash coach, lavished praise on Collopy, saying that for Jack, “it’s always team first,” and described him as “unassuming, humble and self-effacing,” noting that he never seeks the limelight. He added that he could have given Jack additional, individualized workouts to improve his chances at the individual national title, but that Jack preferred to train with his teammates and help the whole squad improve. Jack’s father, **Rick Collopy**, confirmed that his son doesn’t like to be singled out for special attention; that as much as he loves running, he enjoys the team aspect more than individual accolades. He said that Jack’s experience with the Granite State Flash and with the Junior Olympic program has been wonderful, noting that at an early age, Jack has already had a chance to travel around the country and compete in big meets.

As events turned out, at the National Junior Olympic Championships held in Virginia on Dec. 13, Jack Collopy finished 5th in the Youth Boys race and led the Granite State Flash to the national championship in that division. This is Jack’s third national team title for the Granite State Flash (2005, 2006 and 2008) and he has won All-American honors four times. His father hopes that Jack “will get accustomed to the limelight over time,” and given his accomplishments and his very high potential, it appears that he will have plenty of opportunities to get accustomed.