

Jenn Donovan Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for February



Photo: doublejrunning.blogspot.com

BOSTON – **Jenn Donovan**, age 26 of Brighton, MA, who competes for the New Balance Boston Running Club, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for February 2009. Last November as the top New England female finisher at the New England Association's cross country championships, Jenn qualified for a trip to Ireland to run in two races that are part of a 35 year old Irish cultural festival.

Arriving in Ireland on Wednesday February 18, Donovan found that she was still affected by jet lag when she lined up for the 3K Armagh International Road Race the next day. Nonetheless, she was determined to compete hard and ran with the leaders through the first kilometer lap. The race was held at night and the spectators pressed close, cheering wildly. An Irish runner, Kerry Harty, broke away around the halfway mark, but Jenn continued at a strong pace and finished in 4th place (2nd American) in 9:44.

On Sunday, February 22, Donovan competed in the 4K Ras na hEireann cross country race. Jenn went out fast, took the lead early and held it. Linda Byrne of Ireland stayed on her shoulder and went by with two hundred yards left. Jenn tried to up her pace, believing that she could reel her in, but Byrne was able to open a gap and win by three seconds as Jenn finished second in 13:48.

In addition to focusing on her competitions in Ireland, Donovan stated that she looked forward to and enjoyed the social and cultural aspects of the travel as well – declaring it “a fantastic trip.” Showing her versatility, Jenn also ran on the track in February, setting a personal best of 9:15.49 as she came in 12th in the 3000 meters on February 28 at the U.S. Indoor Track & Field Championships in Boston.

Jenn grew up on Long Island and went to Boston College, where she starred in middle distance events from the 1500 to the 5000. She graduated in 2004 with a degree in biology. After teaching for two years, she shifted her career path and now works as a clinical research associate at Tufts Medical Center, where she focuses on the cardiological functioning of stroke patients.

Jenn averages about 60 miles a week in training. She finds it easier to train and get sufficient rest in her current current job as opposed to teaching, when she had to wake up at 5:30 A.M. She describes her running goals as “open-ended”, stating that she would like to see how fast she can run at a variety of distances, set more personal bests, and enjoy training and competing.