

Ruben Sanca Named USATF-New England Athlete of the Month for April



Photo by Alison Wade (eliterunning.com)

BOSTON – **Ruben Sanca**, age 24, who lives in Dorchester, MA, and runs for the BAA has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for April 2011. On April 10, Ruben made his marathon debut by running a fast 2:18:47 at the Rotterdam Marathon in the Netherlands. A few weeks before, on March 20, at the 34th Annual New Bedford Half-Marathon, Ruben ran from the front in his first race at the distance, and won in 1:05:25, more than 90 seconds ahead of the runner-up.

The Rotterdam Marathon course has been the site of several world records and is known as a flat, fast course. For a first marathon, Ruben showed high ambition as he ran close to the first pack through the half-marathon, which he reached in a sparkling 1:06:27. Although he was not able to sustain this pace, his time of 2:18:47 placed him 17th in a stellar international field.

Although Sanca’s win at the New Bedford Half-Marathon was a tune-up for Rotterdam, it can be considered his breakthrough race. Assuming the lead in the first mile, he was unchallenged for the remainder of the race, averaging 5 minutes flat per mile, and winning by 1:35 over Dan Vassallo of Reading, MA.

Ruben earned his B.S. in 2010 at UMass-Lowell, where he is now a graduate student in mechanical engineering. In college, he was a captain for the men’s cross country and track & field teams. His best performances were 14:05.46 for 5000 meters, 8:09.05 for 3000 meters and 4:07.37 for the mile. He achieved qualifying marks for both the NCAA Division II National Championships and for the 2009 U.S. Indoor Championships held in Boston. This is his second selection as the New England Association’s Athlete of the Month, having won previously in January 2010.

Sanca is a graduate of John O’Bryant High School in Boston where he won multiple Boston City and state division championships and was a two-time All-State selection. Born in Cape Verde, his family came to the U.S. in search of educational opportunity for Ruben and his two brothers, when Ruben was 12.

Ruben has enjoyed a breakthrough year thus far. His goals for the future focus especially on international class competition and on representing his native Cape Verde Islands at the Olympic and world championship level. This August he is hoping to represent Cape Verde in the marathon at the IAAF world Track & Field Championships in Daegu, South Korea.