

## Heather Cappello Named USATF-New England Athlete of the Month for October 2011



Photo: [Photorun.net](http://Photorun.net)

BOSTON – **Heather Cappello**, age 31 of Arlington, MA, who competes for the Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.), has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for October 2011. At the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual B.A.A. Half Marathon run on October 9, Heather was the second American woman and 3<sup>rd</sup> overall women’s finisher with a time of 1:13:44, the fastest by a New Englander this year. The time qualified her for a spot in the 2012 U.S. Olympic Marathon Team Trials to be held in Houston in January 2012.

Although Cappello says that she has worked on controlling her pace in the first mile of a race, at the B.A.A. Half Marathon, she went out “way too fast” in the opening mile. She felt the effects over the last couple of miles, but showed her physical and mental strength by persisting and running her personal best for the distance.

Heather has continued to run at a high level despite a daunting work and school schedule that compresses her available training time. She works full time as a Database Assistant at Harvard Medical School’s Office of Resource Development, while also pursuing graduate studies in Biomedical Laboratory and Clinical Science. On work

days she gets up between 5 and 5:30 a.m. to get in her daily run and also does a strength training session using free weights, three evenings a week.

Cappello grew up in Lockport, New York, near Buffalo, where she was a two-time high school state champion at Starpoint High School. She attended Providence College, where she excelled in cross country and middle distance track events. As a sophomore she was the top runner on the women’s cross country team and earned Division I All-American honors for her performance in the NCAA Championships. Unfortunately after her sophomore year, injuries that included stress fractures and surgery for compartment syndrome on both legs, held her back.

Even after college, Heather endured years of inconsistency due to recurring injuries that limited the regularity of her training. However, with the guidance of her college coach, **Ray Treacy**, she has made a strong comeback in the last 2-3 years. Treacy is widely regarded as one of the top distance coaches in the country and Heather calls him “a phenomenal coach...who knows what works best for me.” When profiled by the B.A.A., Heather emphasized the importance of staying injury free by “trying my best to get 7-8 hours of sleep each night, eating healthy, and not overtraining.” With renewed confidence in her running ability, she is looking forward to the U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials.