

Carla Forbes Named USATF-New England Athlete of the Month for February 2012



Photo: Jack Prior

BOSTON – **Carla Forbes**, age 16 of Hyde Park, MA, a junior at Newton North High School, has been named USA Track & Field - New England's Athlete of the Month for February 2012. On February 26 at the Massachusetts All-State Championships at the Reggie Lewis Center, Carla won the long jump with a leap of 20' 1.75", winning by more than two feet. Her jump ranks 2nd in the U.S. this indoor season and stands as the best jump for a non-senior.

She is also the national leader in the triple jump, an event that was not contested at All-States. However, two weeks later at the New Balance Indoor National Championships in New York City, Carla got her opportunity to compete in the triple jump. On her first attempt, she jumped 42' 5.25". This mark not only went on to win the national title, it set a new meet record and also set new Massachusetts and New England indoor records.

Forbes has won nine youth and high school national titles in the long jump and triple jump, while representing either the Waltham Track Club or Newton North High School. Coach **Joe Tranchita** notes that Carla has now won championship titles at seven consecutive national meets, a feat that he does not believe any other athlete in state history has achieved. Following this year's outdoor season, Carla was named the 2011-12 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year.

Coach Tranchita began training Carla in the jumps in 2008 for the Waltham Track Club. He became her high school coach as well

when she entered Newton North as a freshman in September 2009. It would be tough to find a better coach-athlete combination and each has high praise for the other. Carla credits Tranchita with taking her raw talent and with patience, time, and careful attention to technique, allowing her to bring the best out of herself. Tranchita says that even when Carla was in middle school, he could see "that she was a gifted individual with natural explosiveness." However it took a great deal of technical work, especially in the triple jump, to help her progress and bring her talent to a high competitive level.

Tranchita elaborates that Carla shows tremendous drive and attention to detail during every workout and every competition. He praises her perseverance and her continual desire to learn and improve. Her drive and preparation obviously bear fruit. "The thing that is most impressive", he says, "is her ability to compete and execute at the highest levels in the biggest competitions." He notes that nationally prominent colleges around the country are recruiting her. Forbes who has maintained a 3.71 GPA, in the words of her coach, "values the team component of the sport, enjoys a sense of team chemistry" and is mindful of those qualities in assessing schools and their track programs.

Carla acknowledges her drive and her motivation to work as hard as she can; "it always takes a lot of hard work and focus, but it never gets boring. It's exciting and it's still fun, still fresh." Looking to the future, she says it is important to focus beyond herself and take a leadership role with the high school team. However far she is able to take her athletic career, through high school, in college and beyond, she states clearly, "I compete against myself and my own standards. That's how I will continue to improve."