

Jordan Samuels Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for July 2012



Photo: Kikki

BOSTON – **Jordan Samuels**, age 16 of Medford, MA, who competes for the Cambridge Jets youth track club, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for July 2012. At the USATF Junior Olympic National Championships in Baltimore, MD, the last week of July, Samuels was a double medalist in the Boys’ Intermediate division (15-16), earning 4th place in the triple jump with a mark of 44’11.75” and 5th place in the 110 meter hurdles with a time of 14.87.

Jordan, a 2011-2012 Boston Globe All-Scholastic after a sensational season as a sophomore at Thayer Academy, excels at five events: the 100m, 200m, 110m hurdles, the 300m hurdles and the triple jump - and this past season has already won New England Championships for the Independent League Schools in the triple jump and 300m hurdles.

Even before the JO National Championships, Jordan had the following best marks through 10th grade in high school: 100m in 11.34, 200m in 22.84, 110m high hurdles in 14.64, 300m intermediate hurdles in 40.04 and a leap of 45’ 4.75” in the triple jump.

Given the breadth of Samuels’ excellence, it is natural to wonder how he will prioritize his training and his competitive focus for the future. Jordan gives clear answers. “The 110 hurdles are by far my favorite event,” he says. “It’s not necessarily about having a great day, I’m very consistent – I don’t tend to have off days.”

Elaborating on his focus and preparation, given the speed and precision that hurdling requires, Jordan says, “you have to be sure of yourself, there’s no second-guessing in hurdles.” He credits Thayer coach **Dave Callum** with improving his approach and technique in the hurdles, saying that even in the off-season, Coach Callum aided his development on an almost daily basis.

Samuels says that the triple jump is his second favorite event. “Triple jump and hurdles go hand-in-hand. There is more thought process behind triple jumping and hurdling. There’s much more technique than in the sprints.” Given how much he prizes “thought process,” it is no surprise that Samuels is an honors student at an academically rigorous school and that mathematics is his favorite subject. In fall of 2012, Jordan is transferring to Boston College High School. Among the factors in transferring, Jordan expects more competitive opportunity than is available in Independent League Schools.

Jordan began youth track & field competition in the 7-8 year old division at the Needham Youth Classic. He did surprisingly well, and his father, Patrick, introduced him to his long-time friend, **Curtis Jackman**, coach of the Cambridge Jets youth team. Jordan says he owes a great deal to Coach Jackman, who recognized his talent and his ability to thrive on hard work and began to expect more of him and push him harder.

Asked about future goals, Jordan says that he wants to compete in college and will be looking for a school that is academically strong and has a great track program, stating, “I definitely want to take track & field as far as I can.”