

## Tim Ritchie Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for October 2013



*Photo: Scott Mason*

BOSTON – **Tim Ritchie** of Brighton, MA, who runs for the B.A.A., has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for October 2013. On October 6, at the USA Marathon Championships held at the Twin Cities Marathon in Minneapolis, Tim finished 6<sup>th</sup> in 2:14:50. This is the fastest marathon by a New Englander in more than 20 years. Ritchie, a 2009 graduate of Boston College, was one of the best distance runners in B.C. history, and is currently an assistant track and cross country coach at his alma mater. Ritchie’s previous marathon best was 2:21:31, set at the 2013 Boston Marathon.

Tim notes that in the Boston Marathon, he went out fast, reaching the half marathon in 1:06, and then crashing badly over the last 5K. He says he ran the last mile in about 9 minutes. At Twin Cities, he opted for a patient strategy. Although he had a goal of placing in the top 5, he held back when the lead pack pulled away in the early miles. He reached the midpoint in 1:07:35. Beginning in mile 16, he started to reel in runners, moving from 14<sup>th</sup> place to top 10 by mile 20. From mile 20-24 there is a series of hills. Tim felt strong and able to maintain pace and he continued to pass runners. Aware that he was in 6<sup>th</sup> place with 400m to go, Tim ran as hard as he could and missed catching the 5<sup>th</sup> place runner by just 5 seconds. Despite the hills, Ritchie had run a negative split of 1:07:15 for the second half of the race.

Only after the race did Tim learn that his 2:14:50 was 10 seconds under the “A” standard for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials. He said it was “a huge thrill to hear this.” Once he had more time to reflect on its significance, Tim said that making the standard took a lot of pressure off and would allow him to take more chances in upcoming marathons.

In January 2014, Ritchie ran the U.S. Half Marathon Championships in Houston in a torrid 1:02:00, finishing 9<sup>th</sup>. Surprisingly Tim’s weekly mileage seldom goes above 70-75. He said that he concentrates on high-quality training. As an example, he said an easy 10-miler for him is under 60 minutes. Although he lost more than three months of training due to injury this spring and summer, he is fit again and ready to race. His focus race this fall will be the New York City Marathon.

For the longer term, he is focused on the U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials which will take place in Los Angeles in February 2016. Asked about his hopes and expectations for the trials marathon, Ritchie did not hesitate, saying “I want to make the team and I want to compete at the Olympics.”