

Pete Hammer Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for April 2014



Photo: Scott Mason

BOSTON – **Pete Hammer**, age 47 of Needham, MA, who runs for the BAA, is USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for April 2014. On April 21 in the 118th Boston Marathon, Pete ran 2:33:02, finishing 2nd in the M45-49 division. Pete was 8th overall in the masters division and he led the BAA M40 masters team to the club victory by more than 10 minutes. The other BAA masters scorers were Patrick Callahan, age 41 of Needham, MA, in 2:37:53 and Wayne Levy, age 48 of Waban, MA in 2:43:50.

Just six days after the marathon, Hammer finished a close second in the USATF Masters 10K Road Race Championships at the James Joyce Ramble in Dedham, MA. His time of 32:41 was only 4 seconds behind Mike Galoob, age 40 of South Kingstown, RI. Hammer’s outstanding performance led the BAA M40 men to the national team title, with Christopher Magill, age 40 of Albion, RI in 32:57 and Wayne Levy in 35:38 following. The BAA team edged the Atlanta Track Club by 3 seconds.

Pete ran cross country for three years at the University of New Hampshire, but after college gravitated to other fitness activities like cycling and mountaineering. In 1996, at age 30, he decided to run the 100th Boston Marathon and this re-ignited his interest in running. In 1999, he ran a personal best

2:20:04 at the Chicago Marathon, qualifying for the U.S. Olympic Trials marathon and just missing the “A” qualifying standard by 4 seconds. Within a couple of years he was busy raising a family and studying for a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering, so running took a back seat until 2011, when he joined the BAA and resumed serious training.

Asked about this year’s Boston Marathon, Hammer notes that he usually runs a shorter race a few weeks before the marathon to get a gauge of his fitness. This year he didn’t do a pre-marathon race, and was unsure how fast he could run. Consequently, he went out at a pace that proved to be conservative. He reached the half marathon in 1:17:23, but felt fresh and picked up the pace on the hills. Ultimately, he ran the last 15K faster than his first 15K and negatively split the course, running the second half in 1:15:39.

He says that because the marathon had not beaten him up, he recovered “shockingly fast.” Though he hadn’t planned to run the James Joyce Ramble 10K just six days later, he felt ready and, together with his BAA masters teammates, wanted to make a good showing against their rival, the Atlanta Track Club. This they did, as Pete, at age 47, came within 4 seconds of winning the national M40 10K road title, and the BAA team edged their rivals from Atlanta for the national team title.