

B.A.A. Women's Cross Country Team Named USATF – New England's Athlete of the Month for December 2014



Photo: Mike McGrane, B.A.A.

BOSTON – The Boston Athletic Association's women's cross country team is USA Track & Field - New England Athlete of the month for December 2014. At the USATF Club Cross Country Championships on December 13 at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA, the B.A.A. team of **Sarah Pagano, Juliet Botorff, Elaina Balouris, Jen Rhines** and **Emily Lipari** finished first in a field of 38 teams. They beat the

favored Boulder Running Club 43 to 48.

Pagano led the way with a 6th place finish in 19:41 over the 6K course. She was followed by Botorff in 9th place, Balouris in 10th place, Rhines in 19th place, and Lipari in 20th place. Katie Mathews finished 22nd and Heather Cappello finished 44th to round out the top seven for the B.A.A.

Rhines, who finished in 19th place in 20:19, is a three-time U.S. Olympian, and was the masters winner at the New England cross country championships. By choosing to run with her club in the open division, she sacrificed an easy first place in the women's masters division, where the winning time was 21:31.

The B.A.A. has assembled a high performance team - led and coached by Terrence Mahon since 2013 - that has rapidly become a force, regionally and nationally. Preceding their victory at the club national championships, the B.A.A. women's team won the USATF - New England Cross Country Championship at Franklin Park in November, claiming the top five places for a perfect score of 15. With 200 meters to go all five B.A.A. runners were together. Sarah Pagano sprinted to the individual victory in 20:45 over the 6K course, but behind her Balouris, Botorff, Mathews and Rhines finished within 3 seconds.