

Mary Saxer Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for February 2014



Photo: Victah Sailer/Photo Run

BOSTON – **Mary Saxer**, who lives in Boston and trains at MIT under her personal coach, Bruce Wilkerson, is USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for February 2014. On February 23, at the U.S. Indoor Track & Field Championships in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Mary won the national title in the pole vault with a jump of 15’ 5.5” (4.71m). Earlier in February, at the New Balance Boston Grand Prix meet, Saxer finished 2nd, jumping 14’ 9”. In January, Saxer won the Pole Vault Summit in Reno, Nevada with a leap of 15’ 1”.

Mary grew up in Lancaster, NY. At Lancaster High School, she became interested in track & field and quickly achieved a high level of performance, winning four indoor and outdoor state titles in the long jump. Rick Suhr – a pole vault coach married to Jen Suhr, the 2012 Olympic gold medalist in the woman’s pole vault – spotted Saxer at a long jump clinic and convinced her to try the pole vault.

Saxer showed outstanding ability in her new event, quickly becoming one of the best young vaulters in the world. As a high school senior she won the National Scholastic Indoor Championships and became the first high school athlete to clear 14 feet. She was named the 2005 National High School Indoor Athlete of the Year.

Saxer entered Notre Dame University on a scholarship in 2005. Although she did well in Big East Conference competition as a pole vaulter and set new personal bests in the long jump, she was not able to match her best high school performances in the pole vault.

Mary graduated from Notre Dame in 2009 and began to compete professionally, training under her current coach, Danny Wilkerson. In 2010, she placed 3rd at the 2010 U.S. Outdoor Championships, vaulting a personal best of 4.50 meters (14’ 9”). In 2011 Mary broke the 15 foot barrier with a personal best of 4.60 meters (15’ 1”). She began to compete around the world, placing in the Diamond League meet in Shanghai and in other high-level international competitions.

Her current best vault is 4.70 meters (15’ 5”) and she ranked in the top ten in the world for 2013. She is focused on making the U.S. team for the 2016 Rio De Janeiro Olympic Games.