

Garrett O'Toole Named USATF – New England's Athlete of the Month for June 2014



Photo: Larry Eder

BOSTON – **Garrett O'Toole** of Weston, MA, an 18 year old senior at Middlesex Academy in Concord, MA, is USA Track & Field – New England's Athlete of the Month for June 2014. On June 5, at the Adrian Martinez Classic in Concord, he ran 4:01.89 for the mile. His performance not only set new Massachusetts and New England high school records for the mile; it also put him among the top 10 all-time U.S. high school milers. Later in June, O'Toole was named as the 2013-14 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field athlete of the Year.

The Adrian Martinez Classic is a festival of mile races for all ages and abilities. It includes elite races at 800m, the mile, and 5000m. This year's edition included 7 Olympians and 55 other professional runners. O'Toole, running on his home track, was entered in the elite men's mile.

Although Garrett's personal best for the mile was 4:12.91 from the indoor season, in May he had run 3:45.55 for 1500m - roughly equivalent to a 4:02 mile – so he hoped to run close to 4 minutes. The rabbit set a fast pace so Garrett held back, running 60-61 seconds for each of the first three laps, then kicking strongly over the final 200 meters, passing several runners and

finishing 6th in 4:01.89. The quality of the was field evident in that Leo Manzano, Olympic silver medalist for the U.S. at the 2012 London Olympics, was 4th in 3:59. Afterwards, Garrett had the chance to speak with Manzano and pose for photos with him. He said that Manzano advised him to stay humble and be thankful for what the sport has given him.

Garrett's breakthrough in the mile is founded on hard training and steady improvements over his years at Middlesex Academy. As a junior, his teammate, James Randon, - now a freshman at Yale – was actually ranked ahead of O'Toole and the two of them pushed each other to higher accomplishments. Garrett says that under the tutelage of his coach, Desiree Sheff, he has not aimed at dramatic breakthroughs, but rather at incremental improvements that will allow him to continue improving over the long-term. He finished high school with personal bests of 1:49.68 for 800m and 8:29.27 for 3000m indoors. He will enroll at Princeton University this fall, where he will continue to compete in track & field.