

Carly Muscaro Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for May 2015



Photo: merrimackathletics.com

BOSTON – **Carly Muscaro**, a sophomore at Merrimack College has been named USA Track & Field - New England's Athlete of the Month for May 2015. On May 9th, at the New England Intercollegiate (NEICAA) championships held at MIT, Carly won the 400 meters in a new meet and facility record time of 51.83. Carly's margin of victory was just over two seconds. Her time, which is the second fastest ever for a New England collegian, qualified her for the USATF Outdoor Championships which will be held in Eugene, Oregon the last week of June, and gave her a provisional qualifying time for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Trials.

On May 23rd at the NCAA Division II Championships in Allendale, Michigan, Carly finished 2nd in 52.48, her third national silver medal in the event in two years of indoor and outdoor competition. This past March, Muscaro competed in the 300 at the USATF Indoor Championships at the Reggie Lewis Center, becoming the first Merrimack College athlete to reach an open national championship.

Carly attended Ashland (MA) High School where she specialized in the 400 meters and had a best time of 58.16, achieved in her junior year. Her breakthrough performances, in her first two years of college, have been nothing short of extraordinary. She notes that when she arrived at Merrimack, she started training very differently; doing much harder workouts and more event-specific training for the long sprints. Intensive weight training for the first time made a big difference, as did adopting a healthier diet.

Nonetheless, she didn't know what to expect as she began her freshman indoor season. She ran 57.39 for 400 meters at an early meet, then quickly dropped her times into the 56 and 55 second range in subsequent meets. She finished her first season running a PB of 55.03 at the New England collegiate championships, then winning a silver medal at the NCAA Division II Indoor Championships. By then, Carly and her coaches had radically revised her vision of what she might achieve as an athlete.

Muscaro takes pride in her mental strength, stating "I'm as mentally tough as they come...the hard work in track sucks 99% of the time, so you have to make the 1% worth it." She says she has a strong desire to prove herself which keeps her drive and motivation high. Although half of her collegiate athletic career is still ahead of her, and her nearer goals are to win Division II national championships, she is already aiming at running professionally after college. Carly notes that, given her qualifier for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Trials, next year's outdoor season presents a dilemma. If she goes all out to try to make the U.S. Olympic, team she will taper less for the collegiate championship season. Although it is a genuine dilemma that she will need to resolve with the help of her coaches, it could certainly be described as a high-quality dilemma.