

Emma Fitzgerald Named USATF – New England’s Athlete of the Month for June 2016



Photo: PhotoRun

BOSTON – **Emma Fitzgerald** of Braintree, MA, a graduating senior at Thayer Academy, is USA Track & Field - New England’s Athlete of the Month for June 2016. On June 17-18 at the 2016 New Balance National Scholastic Track & Field Championships in Greensboro, NC, Emma scored 5464 points to win the heptathlon, a meet record and the best high school mark in the nation for 2016. Emma also placed 4th in the javelin at the New Balance Nationals. The following weekend at the USA Junior Championships in Clovis, CA, Fitzgerald again won a national title in the heptathlon, scoring 5451 points. She also placed 2nd in the javelin and qualified to compete for Team USA in both the heptathlon and javelin at the IAAF World Junior (U20) Championships to be held in Bydgoszcz, Poland July 19-24.

In Poland, Emma’s goals were to finish in the top 10 and set a new personal best in the heptathlon. This she did, placing 8th in the World Juniors with a new PB of 5577 points, a single point shy of the all time U.S. high school record. Fitzgerald also placed 10th in the javelin.

Emma has starred in youth track & field for years, and among her awards and honors, has won numerous national championship titles. In July 2011 she earned her first USATF - New England AOM award. Yet, surprisingly, Emma cites an injury in 2014 as the impetus for a much more serious commitment to conditioning that has led to her recent breakthroughs. During her down time, Fitzgerald says she became an avid student of exercise science and nutrition and began applying the lessons to track & field training. She started doing more sprint work and event-specific practice which produced substantial improvements in all seven heptathlon events.

Asked about her two national titles in June, Emma noted that in the New Balance Nationals, she had a great first day but a disappointing second day. The next weekend, at the USATF Junior Championships, she reversed field with a subpar day one performance and a strong finish on day two. Asked about her mental approach to competition, Emma stated that “the heptathlon embodies the saying that ‘it’s not over ‘til it’s over.’ I’ve learned to keep my composure and not get shaken by an unexpected off performance.”

Emma will attend the University of Wisconsin this fall where her tentative plan is to major in nutrition or exercise science. Other than the javelin, Fitzgerald says she has not had much event coaching and is looking forward to the coaching at Wisconsin. She has set specific high-level goals in key events. For example, she wants to top 20 feet in the long jump as a freshman and as a sophomore wants to clear 6 feet in the high jump, throw the javelin more than 175 feet and wants to run 2:20 or faster in the 800 meters.

Emma’s ambition and determination are evident as she states that she wants to make Team USA for the IAAF U23 Worlds in 2018 and wants to make the U.S. Olympic team for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

USATF – New England’s mission is to continue its leadership role as one of the outstanding associations of the national governing body in Athletics.