

## 2017 USATF New England Grand Prix Popular and LDR Chairs Recommended Slate

From the results of the popular vote, the following slate is created:

1	Amherst 10 Miler - Amherst, MA (February 26)
2	New Bedford Half Marathon- New Bedford, MA (March 19)
3	Frank Nealon Boston Tune-Up 15k - Upton, MA (April 1)
4	Hollis Fast 5k- Hollis, NH (June 8)
5	Bobby Doyle 5 Miler - Narragansett, RI (August 13)
6	Lone Gull 10k - Gloucester, MA (Sept 24)
7	Baystate Marathon - Lowell, MA (October 15)

**The LDR Chairs are recommending this as the slate for this year.** The main reason for this is that the slate chosen by the voters does a good job of geographically spreading out the series (races in Rhode Island, New Hampshire and all parts of Massachusetts including Western Mass), the races are spread out in different months and there are minimal conflicts with other national and regional races. **While the slate isn't perfect in all these categories (there is no Vermont race and the Baystate Marathon is the same day as the National Master's 5k XC Championships at Franklin Park), the chairs do not feel there are any egregious oversights that are absolutely necessary to correct.** If the club leadership feels strongly enough to make changes to the slate to address the issues brought up, or others that they may have discovered in discussion with their clubs, then they are more than welcome to suggest and approve changes.

Potential issues that you may want to discuss with your club about that were brought up in discussions on the potential slate:

**In general** - There has been some concern expressed that the three longer distance, non-marathon races are bunched up too much. Potential options would be the Middlebury Half Marathon in Middlebury, VT (May 7th) and the New Hampshire 10 Miler in Auburn, NH (August 26th). **There is also no race in Vermont and there is a conflict with the Baystate Marathon and the National Master's 5k XC Championship Race at Franklin Park.**

**Amherst 10 Miler** - The positives of the race are that it is a well attended competitive race, that has a long history and is good preparation for runners competing in the Boston Marathon. It has been a Grand Prix race several times as well. There has been concern from some about the potential weather issues and the travel concerns that would arise from them. The race is a week after the USATF-NE Indoor Track Championships which is not necessarily an issue but something to keep in mind. Potential replacements would be the Middlebury Half Marathon in Middlebury, VT (May 7th) and the New Hampshire 10 Miler in Auburn, NH (August 26th).

**New Bedford Half Marathon** - Very well regarded, well run race, with extensive history and a large, quality field. It is also at the perfect time for a half marathon race in preparation for runners competing in the Boston Marathon. There has been concern amongst some that it is the Grand Prix Half Marathon Championship every year. The potential replacement would be the Middlebury Half Marathon in Middlebury, VT (May 7th).

**Frank Nealon Boston Tune-Up 15k** - Similar to the Amherst 10 Miler and the New Bedford Half Marathon, the Frank Nealon Boston Tune-Up 15k is good timing for runners competing in the Boston Marathon as a final tune up. The race has a long history, and it adds back a distance that has been left out of the Grand Prix Series since 2014. There has been some concern with three longer races to start off the slate and some may choose to want to choose this as the race to replace as it is only two weeks before the Boston Marathon (what is a positive trait for some may be a negative trait for others). Potential replacements would be the Middlebury Half Marathon in Middlebury, VT (May 7th) and the New Hampshire 10 Miler in Auburn, NH (August 26th).

**Hollis Fast 5k** - The name says it all as the Hollis Fast 5k course is a very fast race due from being a point to point downhill course. It is a unique race in that respect and is a race in New Hampshire. It has also been the NE 5k Grand Prix Championship in the past. There has been concern expressed that the race is on a Thursday and therefore difficult to travel to for the majority of members, many of whom may not be able to get out of work early in order to travel to a road race. It was also pointed out that there may not be an official record set at this event due to the downhill nature of the race, but that also does not stop you from telling your friends about a new PR from the race. The potential replacements would be the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day 5k in Manchester, NH (September 10th) and the Downtown 5k (formally the CVS Downtown 5k) in Providence, RI (September 17th).

**Bobby Doyle 5 Miler** - This race was the Grand Prix 5 Mile Championship the past two years and has added depth to an already quality field at a well established race. It also gives Rhode Island a Grand Prix Championship Event. This was by far the closest vote with only 24 votes separating it between the 2014 5 Mile Championship, the potential replacement, the Ribfest 5 Miler in Merrimack, NH (June 18th).

**Lone Gull 10k** - This race has been the Grand Prix 10k Championship since 2013 and has been a well run race with a quality field and was by far the biggest margin of victory in the popular vote this year. Another benefit of this race is that the race director is willing to host it on September 24th as planned, but also October 1st should the need arise. Should club leadership feel that it is time to switch the 10k race up, one could select the Fairhaven Father's Day 10k in Fairhaven, MA (June 18th) or the Boston Firefighters Local 718 10k in Dorchester, MA (October 15th). It should be noted October 15th is the same day as the Baystate Marathon, which is the popular vote getter in the marathon and the Master's National 5k XC Championship in Franklin Park.

**Baystate Marathon** - This race has been the Grand Prix Championship in the past (most recently in 2010) and is a fast, two loop course, close to Boston and New Hampshire, with a good history. **There is a direct conflict with the National Master's 5k XC Championship held at Franklin Park, so some Master's runners wanting to run both would be affected and not be able to compete in both.** The potential replacements are the Vermont City Marathon in Burlington, VT (May 28th), which would give Vermont a Grand Prix Championship, but also potentially be the 4th longer distance event in a row, and the Cape Cod Marathon in Falmouth, MA (October 29th). It should also be noted that the Cape Cod Marathon is one week before the USATF NE XC Championships, which could potentially affect all runners wanting to do the Marathon and the NE XC Championships.