

John Dotson Biography

DuPont High School / (class of 1976) DuPont City, WV

Classification: AAA Boys

Specialty: Distance

Marshall University / (class of 1981) Huntington, WV

John Eric Dotson (born on March 13, 1958) is from Rand, that's located on the Kanawha River in Kanawha County, West Virginia. He is a 1976 graduate of DuPont High School and a former distance running standout. He is the son of the late James and Margaret Dotson. John has three siblings, sister Kathy (deceased), brother Jerry, and sister Victoria.

John said he started running because he was "too small to play football, too short to play basketball and too spastic to stand in the outfield to play baseball."

High School:

John Dotson attended DuPont High School from the fall of 1973 to the spring of 1976. While in high school, John got to run a year with his brother Jerry and also got to run with one of the state's all-time great Miler's, Dave Wilson (4:16.8). Their cross country was Jim Harrison, who was a former state champion in the high hurdles. Their distance coach was Bob Allport from junior high through high school.

Junior Year:

At the 1974 West Virginia State Cross Country Meet, St. Albans High School made history by winning its third consecutive state championship. Martinsburg would claim the runner-up team honor with 81 points, while John Marshall was third with 102 points. Montcalm's Kenny Hensley, a senior, shattered the 2.3-mile Cato Park municipal golf course record in winning the individual title and leading the parade of 10 All-State runners.

Hensley outdueled Martinsburg's Chris Fox over the last 440-yards to cap an effort of 11 minutes, 44 seconds – 15 seconds better than the course record he established the week before in winning Region IV. Fox, a sophomore who only weighed 85 pounds, was on Hensley's back in 11:45.

Team Standings: St. Albans (74), Martinsburg (81), John Marshall (102), Huntington East (107), Brooke County (132), Athens (133), Huntington (138), Oak Hill (148), Fairmont West (179), Greenbrier East (243)

Individual Top 10: 1, Kenny Hensley, Montcalm (11:44, course record); 2, Chris Fox, Martinsburg (11:45); 3, Steve Carnohan, Huntington (11:46); 4, David "Jo-Jo" Dean, Ceredo-Kenova (11:47); 5, David Bowman, Duval (11:48); 6, Steve Worrell, Athens (11:49); 7, Damon Clark, Wheeling (11:50); 8, Tony Skolik, Huntington East (11:53); 9, Kevin Schwing, John Marshall (11:55); 10, Jim Vargo, Oak Hill (11:56)

John Dotson and David Wilson of DuPont and Sissonville's Richard Thompson, all of whom finished in the top seven in Region 3, were disqualified from the state finals. Enforcement of a Secondary Schools Activities Commission rule stating that each team has seven runners in the regionals knocked the three from the competition.

At the 1975 West Virginia High School Class AAA Boys State Track Meet, DuPont's 2-Mile Relay Team (Stevens, Wilson, Dotson, Perry) won with a time of 8:06.1. John Marshall was second (8:09.3), Princeton was third (8:11.4), St. Albans was fourth (8:13.5), and Parkersburg South was fifth (8:17.8).

Senior Year:

At the 1975 West Virginia State Cross Country Meet, Duval's David Bowman outclassed a field and Martinsburg ended St. Albans' domination

in the state high school cross country meet. Bowman was the top individual finisher in 11:32 over the Cato Park course, which measured between 2.2 and 2.3 miles. He was among the leaders from the start and became the front runner about one mile into the run. Bowman eclipsed Kenny Hensley's course record by 12 seconds and opening a 14-second win over Martinsburg's Chris Fox, who was described as "90 pounds of heart." Martinsburg placed five of the top 11 runners to take the team title with 23 points. DuPont's John Dotson made all-state by placing fifth.

Team Standings: 1, Martinsburg (23); 2, St. Albans (66); 3, John Marshall (119); 4, DuPont (120); 5, Athens (153); 6, Keyser (157); 7, Princeton (163); 8, Parkersburg (172); 9, Huntington East (204); 10, Brooke (228)

Individual Top 10: 1, Dave Bowman (11:32 – course record); 2, Chris Fox (11:46); 3, Brian Engle, Martinsburg (11:50); 4, Steve Carnohan, Huntington (11:58); 5, John Dotson, DuPont (12:00); 6, Bill Posey, St. Albans (12:01); 7, Tim Koon, Fairmont West (12:02); 8, Larry Printz, Martinsburg (12:03); 9, Dave Wilson, DuPont (12:06); 10, Rick Dawson, Martinsburg (12:06)

At the 1976 West Virginia High School Class AAA Boys State Track Meet, DuPont's John Dotson won the 880-yard run and placed fourth in the 440-yard dash.

Dotson won the 880-yard run with a time of 1:55.9, while Huntington's Steve Carnohan was runner-up (1:56.9), George Washington's Vogelbach was third (1:58.1), St. Albans' Bill Posey was fourth (1:58.2), Parkersburg South's Tim Nichols was fifth (1:58.6), and Princeton's Via was sixth (1:58.7).

In the 440-yard dash, Bluefield's Haden placed 1st (49.1), George Washington's Danny Vogelbach was second (49.8), West Fairmont's Tim

Koon was third (49.9), DuPont's John Dotson was fourth (49.9), Nitro's Cobb was fifth (50.2), and Ravenswood's Miller was sixth (50.3).

In high school, John's trademark wasn't always about running fast times on the track, but fast finishes.

College:

Dotson is Marshall's only four-time, first-team All-Conference track or cross-country athlete made the All-Southern Conference team in the cross country from 1977 to 1980. Dotson helped Marshall to its first Southern Conference team championship in 1977 (cross country).

He was also the conference outdoor champ in the 1,500 meters and set a school record that stood for over 20 years. He was coached at Marshall by Rod O'Donnell. He was teammates with his brother Jerry in cross country and track while at Marshall.

Post Collegiate:

In 1981, Dotson was runner-up and was the top West Virginia finisher at the Charleston Distance Run 15-Miler with a time of 1:16:12.

In 1982, Dotson placed fourth and was the top West Virginia finisher at the Charleston Distance Run 15-Miler. He would run a personal best time of 1:15.57.

Steve Taylor of St. Marys holds the Top All-Time Best West Virginia Performance at the Charleston Distance Run with a time of 1:14:31 (1987), while John Dotson has the second fastest time of 1:15.57 (1982).

Dotson ran three years of Athletes in Action. The athletic arm of Campus Crusade for Christ. They were most known for their basketball teams in the

'70s and '80s of former college players who would play scrimmage games with D1 teams.

Dotson was a former Cross Country and Track and Field Coach at Portland Christian Middle & High School in Portland, Oregon from 1985-96. He coached 10 individual state champions. He then coached cross country and track at Northwest Christian HS from 2003-2006. He then went back to Portland Christian, where his boys were 3-time state champions and had several individual state champions from the boys and girls team. As a coach, what he was the proudest about was the fact that the boy's championship was won as a team where they scored in 12 out of 17 events.

On Friday, September 23, 2011, John Dotson was Inducted into the Marshall Athletics Hall of Fame along with ten other inductees.

His brother Jerry is a high school coaching legend in Cary, North Carolina and is in that state's track coaching Hall of Fame.

John said, "All the success in my life that I have achieved is because of my brother Jerry. He was always ahead of me, and was always the anchor that stabilized me."

Personal:

John Dotson married Kristi on June 15, 1985. They have a son, Alex, and a daughter, Ashley. The Dotson's currently reside in Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Submitted by Coach Mike McMillion (04/08/19)