

# **D.J. Dutton Leads CM to Top Contender Status in Middle Distances - Is A Tom Lane State Farm Insurance Male Athlete Of Month**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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BELLEVILLE - Senior middle distance runner D.J. Dutton is off to a sensational start for the Civic Memorial boys track and field team. He has eclipsed 2 minutes in the 800

meters with a time of 1:59.92 at the Mascoutah Invite, he was seventh in the competitive Norm Armstrong Invite with a time of 2:01.21. He has been a key member of the 4 x 400 and 4 x 800 relay squads for CM so far this season.

The CM 4 x 800 relay has a best so far this season of 8:07.06 with Lucas Naugle, Justice Eldrige, Tulio Zampieri and Dutton. The 4 x 800 relay squad should be as competitive as any in the state this season.

Dutton is a Tom Lane State Farm Insurance Male Athlete of the Month for CM.

"He's incredible," said Eagles head coach Jake Peal said of Dutton. "He has been a huge piece of our 4x800 the last couple of years, he's All-State, and this year, he's gotten a little bit stronger, and his leg speed is definitely quite a bit quicker. He'll be moving to the anchor of the 4x400, and I'm playing with the 4x800 lineup, moving him to the anchor leg. D.J.'s someone to rely on to hunt people down, and have the confidence he will have to compete with whatever you put in front of him."

Dutton did enjoy success in the 1,600 last season, and this indoor season, qualified for the Illinois Top Times indoor meet, which serves as the unofficial state indoor meet, by running a 2:02.40 to qualify.

"He's more of a miler," Peal said "but this year, maybe he'll do the 4x800 and 800 double. This year, he qualified for the Top Times in the open 800, which is cool."

His split in the 4x899 meter relay was a 2:01, along with running a 2:04 in the 800 at the Top Times meet.

"Considering there was a 30-minute break between races, that was a really good double," Peal said.

In addition, the 4x800 relay team was a state Class 2A qualifier last season, and are expected to compete again for a spot in the state meet around Memorial Day weekend in Charleston.

Again congrats to this CM sensation on his Tom Lane State Farm Insurance Male Athlete of the Month honor.