

Outspoken Brian Oldfield, the brash non-conformist who threw a scare into the big boys Friday in the opening round of the shot put, is gaining confidence by the throw.

In the qualifying round, after blasting out a practice put of what observers later said was 72-7, he broke the Hayward Field record with a toss of 68-9¾.

Although George Woods and Randy Matson topped it a few minutes later in their qualifying throws, Oldfield is a definite contender going into today's 6:30 final.

"I fouled in practice last week at 70-10," said the mammoth from the Chicago Track Club. "But I had a good throw at 69-6½."

Then came his astounding 72-footer. "I can get 70 in the finals," says Oldfield. "I just have to keep my cool."

To watch Brian Oldfield—a man built like a mastodon and surging with brute strength—is to watch raw energy in motion.

There was no question as to who was the crowd pleaser Friday during the preliminary round.

The shot has fast become one of track's glamor events—and athletes like Oldfield quickly become favorites.

His warmup routine is unorthodox (he flips the iron ball with both hands backwards over his head) but his post-throw guise is more interesting.

Immediately after his final throw Friday, Oldfield strode to the sidelines and lit up a cigarette.

'Mastodon' heaves 72-7 in practice

Randy Matson would have blushed. George Woods would have tisk-tisked and turned away.

The image?

"I lit up the cigarette on purpose," said the blond-haired Oldfield. "There's

too many stereotypes in America and athletes are one of the worst."

The man is notorious for his training habits. "Sure, I watch my weight and appetite, and lift weights," Oldfield admits. "But I didn't say anything about smoking or drinking."

The select group Oldfield must break to get on the Olympic team—Woods, Matson and Al Feurbach, is mixed in its opinion of the Chicago strong-arm.

He's the same man who threw the discus for one of the few times in his life at the Rose Festival meet in Portland two weeks ago and got over 190 feet.

"Once he learns technique," said Woods, "He'll be one of the world's best putters. Maybe he is now. . . we'll see tomorrow."

Oldfield figures he's fired the first psychological shot at the favorites. They haven't psyched him yet.

"It doesn't bother me. And other people don't bother me. I don't let them."

Oldfield's previous best this year had been 67-4. Now it appears he's putting his erratic form together and coming out with the finished product.

But recognition won't come easy.

"When you're number four you're a Shmuck," Oldfield cracked.

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