



Marathon Course

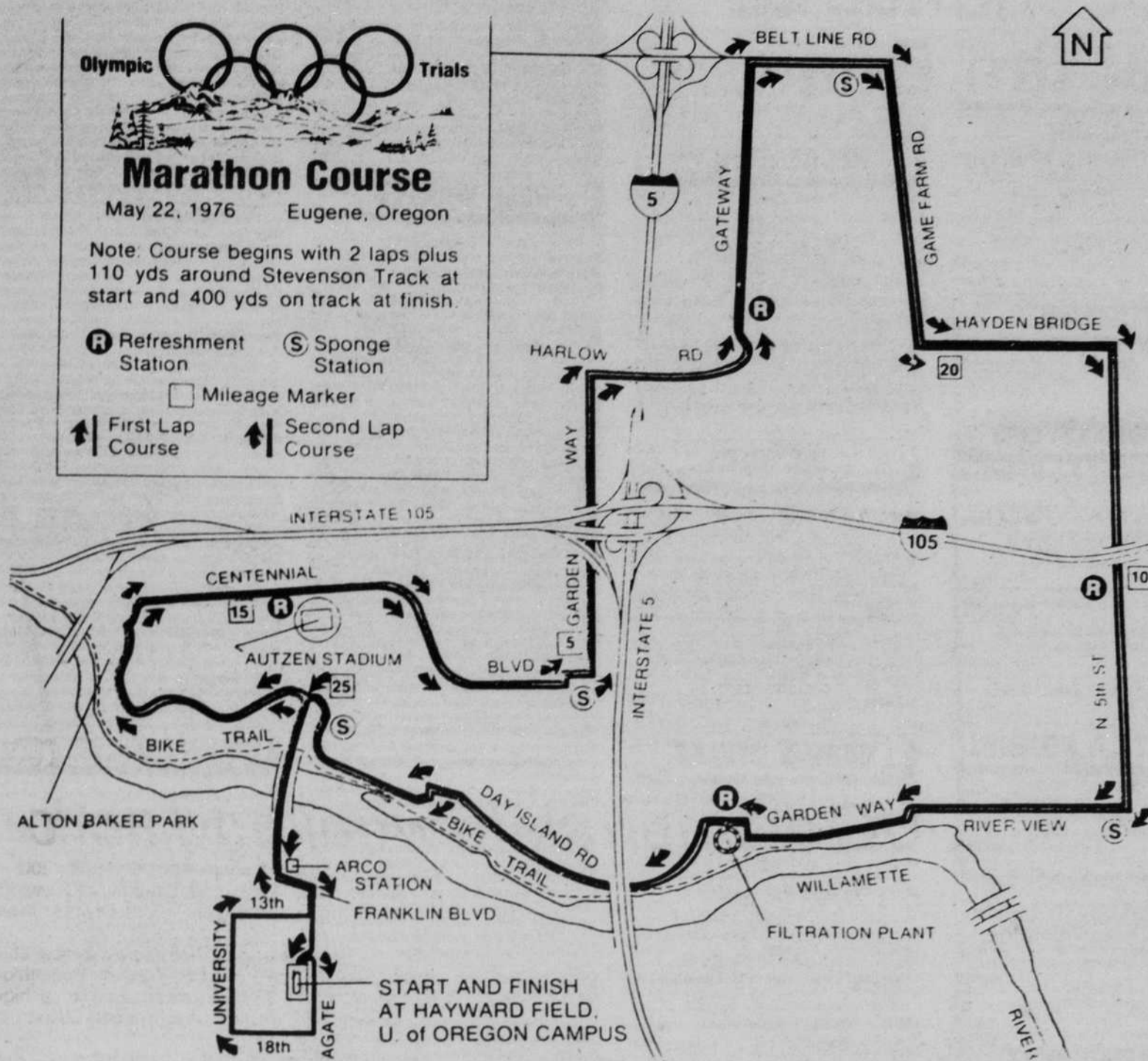
May 22, 1976 Eugene, Oregon

Note: Course begins with 2 laps plus 110 yds around Stevenson Track at start and 400 yds on track at finish.

R Refreshment Station **S** Sponge Station

□ Mileage Marker

↑ First Lap Course ↑ Second Lap Course



Shorter strongest of strong field

By JOHN HENDERSON
Of the Emerald

Olympic gold medalist Frank Shorter sat in the unsheltered bleachers at Hayward Field, staring up at the gray, threatening clouds above him.

"I'm hoping Saturday for sunny and warm weather," said Shorter. "On the right day, you can go as fast here as anywhere else in the world."

Shorter should know. He tied with Kenny Moore for first place in the 1972 Olympic Marathon trials in Eugene, and is expected to win again in the trials which begin here Saturday at 4:30.

The top three finishers qualify for the 1976 Olympic team but Shorter isn't about to buy any Montreal sight-seeing maps yet. The wiry, tanned Yale graduate who practices law when he's not running, is a veteran of the grueling 26-mile 385-yard race. He's run it enough times to know predictions are hard to make.

"It's hard to get optimistic about a marathon because it's so long," said Shorter, who runs for the Florida Track Club. "I usually get optimistic about two miles from the end. It's too long of a grind to get any pre-conceived notions. I'm just going to run as hard as I can and if nothing goes wrong, I should make the team."

Oregon and the Oregon Track Club will conduct a special invitational meet in conjunction with the marathon, featuring a women's 10,000 meter race.

Saturday's marathon may not be the rout that it was in '72 when Shorter won in 2:15.58. With the marathon growing in popularity every year, there will be a number of runners among the 71 entries

who may challenge Shorter.

Among them are Edward Mendoza (2:14.13) of Arizona, Russ Pate (2:15.22) of the Columbia Track Club and American record holder William Rodgers (2:09.55) of the Greater Boston Track Club. Rodgers and 1975 AAU champion Gary Tuttle (2:17.26), of the Beverly Hills Striders are expected to be Shorter's biggest challengers.

"The field is much better this year," said Shorter who has run 2:10:30 and hold four of the top 10 times for Americans. "Four years ago, 2:20 would be the third place time. Now there are 30 to 40 with better than that. Rodgers ran a real strong Boston Marathon and Tuttle is a real strong distance runner. There's just a question of whether he can do it in the marathon."

Another runner who could've challenged Shorter was Kenny Moore of the Oregon Track Club. Misfortune struck the former Oregon great as he came down with a 104-degree temperature this week, and was forced to scratch.

"I think that's really too bad," said Shorter. "Ken could've made the team by the way he was telling me about his training. But part of getting ready for these things is preparing yourself in case things do not go right."

With Moore out and a gold medal already to his credit, Shorter is considered the favorite, a position he's very familiar with.

"I've been the favorite for a long time," he said. "I've gotten used to it, but I can't worry about losing. Once you start worrying about losing, it's time to get out. I can only try as hard as I can."

"It is flattering to consider yourself the person they're gunning for. But if all the guys are looking out for me, it should be an advantage. If they're worrying about me, it

can only help me."

Another thing that should help Shorter is Eugene's marathon course. The run consists of two laps around a flat layout, stretching from Hayward Field to Belt Line Rd. and from Autzen Stadium to Springfield.

"It's as fast as any course I've run on," said Shorter. "Two loops are faster than going out and back. And international rules have stated that maximum level difference can be only 50 meters. By that, Boston doesn't qualify. The main purpose is to run 26 miles as fast as you can on roads. If you're going to run over hills you might as well run on a cross-country course."

"I like this course. I'm a form runner, not a strength runner."

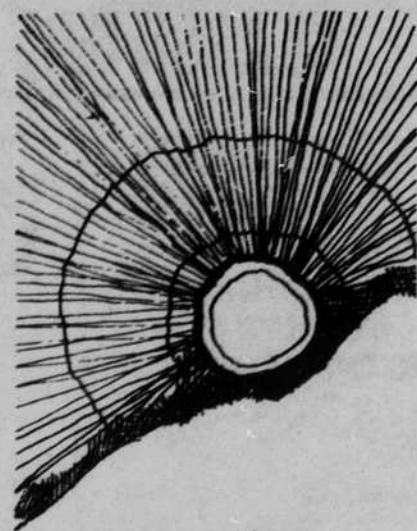
Shorter has only run one marathon in the last two years, but doesn't think that will hurt him.

"The marathon isn't the kind of race you train for by running it," he said. "The 10,000 meters isn't the kind of race either. You can train for it by running the 1500. Now that I think it over, I just needed two hard efforts within two months. I thought it would be better if I stayed away for a while. I didn't have to prove to myself I could run it because I knew I could."

After this year, the 28-year-old Shorter will be looking forward to more relaxation and less running. Leisure time is rare in a life full of law books and stopwatches.

"I'm going to start concentrating more on law and less on running," he said. "I'll still run at the competitive level, but if I want to go skiing, I'll go skiing. If I want to go fishing, I'll go fishing. I want a situation where I can do what I want to do and not worry about running my 20 miles every day."

Those 26 miles around Eugene, however, will be the only thing on Shorter's mind Saturday.



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