

5,000-meter fittingly shapes up as top event at Pre Monetary awards highlight men's and women's races

By Ashley Conklin
Emerald Sports Reporter

It makes perfect sense that the top event in today's Prefontaine Classic will be the 5,000 meters.

Steve "Pre" Prefontaine took the running world by storm in the early 1970s by excelling in everything from the 5,000 to the six-miler before his death in 1975.

But the 5,000 was Pre's speciality and meet director Tom Jordan has assembled a 5,000 field for Friday's meet at Hayward Field that would make even Pre proud.

Doug Padilla, Steve Plasencia, and Joe Falcon — probably the three top distance runners in the U.S. today — will all compete in the 5,000 today, and Jordan has even added an extra incentive for the trio.

If the winner breaks 13:24.86, the top time in the world this year by Australia's Andrew Lloyd, he will also take home \$5,000.

"I'm really impressed with

the men's 5,000," Jordan said. "I think it's the best on American soil since the 1984 Olympics."

During the indoor season, Padilla broke his own two-mile record with a time of 8:15.02. He followed that up with an American road record of 13:30 in the 5,000 and then won the 1,500 in the S&W Modesto Invitational May 5.

Plasencia, in complete contrast to Padilla, relies on a front-running style that often burns other competitors out. And his results are just as good.

He recorded a personal record of 13:19.69 in the 5,000 last year and was the No. 3 ranked American at that distance.

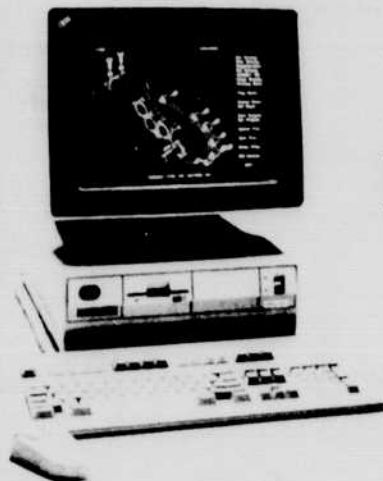
Then there is Falcon, the former Arkansas star who is unbeaten outdoors this season. He won the 1,500 at the Bruce Jenner Classic last weekend and is the U.S. leader at both the 1,500 and mile. This will be his first 5,000 since college.

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Photo by Mark Ylen

Prefontaine Classic event organizer Tom Jordan has assembled an outstanding field of athletes for tonight's track and field meet at Hayward Field.



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