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■ 1995 PREFONTAINE CLASSIC

Disney to film at Pre Classic

Mark McTyre
Oregon Daily Emerald

This Sunday's Prefontaine Classic will bring much more than the world's greatest track and field competitors to Hayward Field, the 21st annual meet will also feature film crews from Walt Disney Pictures and CBS Sports.

Walt Disney Pictures is coming to Hayward Field this weekend to do pre-production for a planned motion picture to be released in the summer or early fall of 1996, based on the life of the late Steve Prefontaine, perhaps America's greatest distance runner of his time.

"We think the meet is a great opportunity to capture some of the excitement and flavor of the days when Steve Prefontaine filled the stands at Hayward Field," producer Irby Smith said, whose credits include *City Slickers*, *Angels in the Outfield*, *Young Guns I and II*, *Stand By Me* and *Major League*.

If track fans in attendance wish to participate in close-ups after the meet concludes at 3 p.m., they're encouraged to wear 1970s-style clothing, according to Smith, who will be in charge of the film crew.

"It's not like everyone needs to be in platform shoes and bell-bottoms," Smith explained, "but keep in mind neon colors and some types of fabric did not exist 20 years ago."

The idea to make the movie first came when Smith approached President and Chairman of Walt Disney Pictures Joe Roth, whom Smith had worked with on other films. Roth, a big Prefontaine fan, was immediately interested in the proposition.

"It was about an easy a sell in terms of pitching a motion picture idea, which usually can take years," said co-producer Jon Lutz, in a previous *Emerald* interview. "Joe Roth thought it was a great idea from the very beginning, so we never had to sell Disney on it."

With the preliminaries out of the



Walt Disney will be filming the crowd at the Prefontaine Classic this weekend, for a movie expected to be released the summer of 1996.

way, all Walt Disney Pictures needed to do was make its pitch to the Prefontaine family and the University.

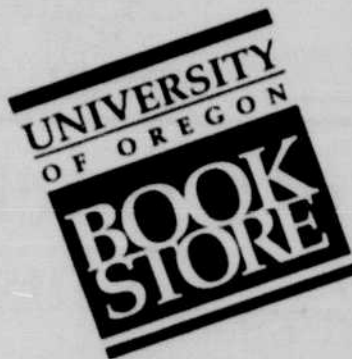
"The Prefontaine family expressed a strong feeling for the Disney project," said Brodie Remington, the University's vice president for public affairs and development. "For the U of O, it's a great opportunity to gain national exposure."

While Walt Disney Pictures is filming for its planned production, CBS Sports will be televising the first live sports broadcast from Eugene on network television during a 90-minute window. It will

be preceded by a one-hour documentary entitled "Fire On the Track," about the life of the runner known to all as "Pre".

"We try to bring all types of events to our Saturday show," Leslie Anne Wade of CBS Sports said in a telephone interview.

"The participation of the Disney film crew makes the event an even more appealing show," CBS producer Craig Silver said in a telephone interview. "With the great fields, live television, and the movie shoot, the level of excitement at the stadium (Hayward Field) should be extraordinarily high."



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