

■ 1995 PREFONTAINE CLASSIC

Pre remembered in record-breaking memorial

Trevor Kearney
Oregon Daily Emerald

Highlighted by a handful of Olympians, a few ex-Oregon stars and several record-breaking performances, Steve Prefontaine was remembered at Sunday's Prefontaine Classic at Hayward Field in front of a record crowd of 13,655.

Honoring the 20th anniversary of Pre's death, Sunday's meet featured the 2-mile run in Prefontaine's honor. A ceremony just before the race — known as Pre's race — included the introduction of several of Pre's former teammates and Pre's father delivering the starter gun to the official.

"Especially at the line — when they did that — that even put another boost of adrenalin in the body," said Todd Williams, runner-up in the race with a time of 8-minutes, 14.58 seconds. "That kind of brought it up another notch."

Before the race, Williams and Bob Kennedy, the winner of the race with a time of 8:14.53, had predicted a new American record, but fell just under two seconds short of the mark. Kennedy's mark, however, was good for a new meet and field record.

"I was feeling the emotion warming up and on the line," Kennedy said, "but as soon as the gun went off it was just another race, which I'm sure is the way Pre would have felt, too. I really wanted to set the American record, but it just didn't happen."

"I just wish we could have given [Pre] that American record," Williams said. "It was meaningful anyway, but I think the icing on the cake would have been if we had broken the record."

The meet saw several records shattered, as Maria Mutola of Mozambique set the meet and Hayward Field records in the 1000-meter run with a time of 2:32.33, and Suzy Hamilton set the American record in the same race with a second-place time of 2:33.93.

Gail Devers of Nike International set the meet record in the 100-hurdles by racing to a 12.84 second finish, and Derek Mills and Nike International's Michael Johnson set the meet records in the 400-meter dash and 200-meter dash, respectively. Mills ran the 400 in 44.13 seconds, breaking Maxie Parks' 1976 record, and Johnson beat out Olympian Carl Lewis in the final stretch to break Kirk Baptiste's 1987 record.

"Basically, I thought I ran the first 50 [meters] and the last 100 [meters] very well and made a mistake in



In the 2-mile race, which was in honor of Steve Prefontaine, Bob Kennedy (right) broke the meet and field records by running the race in 8:14.53. Kennedy barely beat Todd Williams, who ran an 8:14.58.



Dan O'Brien tied for second in the high jump en route to a mini-decathlon victory.



Maria Mutola (front) and Suzy Hamilton provided one of the most exciting races Sunday, as Mutola set new meet and Hayward Field records with a time of 2:32.33 and Hamilton set a new American record with a clocking of 2:33.93.

Oregon Daily Emerald

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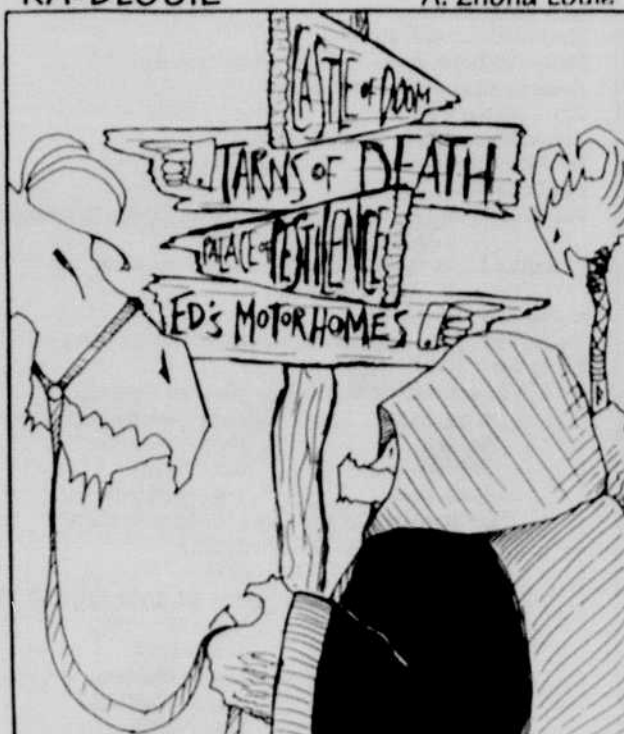
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Monday, June 5, 1995 Oregon Daily Emerald 21A