

1998 PREFONTAINE CLASSIC

Men's field packed with talent

The field for the mile includes the second- and third-ranked runners in the world

By Joel Hood and Alex Pond
Oregon Daily Emerald

The men's 100-meter dash might be Sunday afternoon's featured event, but it isn't the only event worth watching — and certainly not the only event in which records may be in danger.

Ato Boldon and Maurice Greene highlight an elite corps of sprinters that rivals any 100-meter field in the world this season. Kareem Streete-Thompson returns to defend his Prefontaine title from a year ago. The American-born sprinter smoked the 100-meter field last season in a career-best time of 10.12 seconds. This season, Streete-Thompson will battle Boldon, who ran the fastest 100-meter time in the world this season a month ago at the Mt. SAC Relay's in California, and defending 100-meter World Champion Greene.

Olympic Gold Medalist Michael Johnson highlights the eight-man, 200-meter field. Johnson, who won the 200-meter event at the Prefontaine last season, is one of four former Olympians in this year's field.

The field for the men's mile got a shot in the arm earlier this week when the defending 5,000-meter Olympic Gold Medalist, Vénuste Niyongabo, signed on. Niyongabo, who is currently ranked No. 3 in the world in the mile, has seven marks under three minutes, 50 seconds in his career.

The 24-year-old Burundi native



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Michael Johnson waves to the Hayward Field crowd after winning the 200 in 20.17 at last year's Prefontaine Classic.

joins Kenyan Daniel Komen, American Steve Holman and junior world record holder Noah Ngeny of Kenya to form one of the strongest mile fields in the world this year.

Komen holds the 3,000- and 5,000-meters world records both

indoors and out and has run the mile in 3:46.38. Komen said he is coming to the Prefontaine Classic with hopes of becoming the first athlete to run the mile under 3:50 on U.S. soil.

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Marion Jones highlights women's field

Craig Masback of USA Track & Field says Jones is only beginning to realize her potential

By Rob Moseley
Sports Reporter

By all accounts, the 100-meter dash at Sunday's Prefontaine Classic will feature world-class sprinters with Olympic experience racing down the track with one eye focused on the standing record in that event.

But while most observers will be looking for Ato Boldon or Mau-

rice Greene — or even both — to approach 9.84 seconds in the men's 100, fans at the Prefontaine could just as easily see a near-record time in the women's race.

Leading the field in the women's 100 is 1997 World 100- and 200-meter Champion Marion Jones, who has turned in times of 10.79 and 10.71 this season, the latter coming May 19 in China.

While Jones is still far from Florence Griffith-Joyner's world record of 10.49, set in 1988, Craig Masback, CEO of USA Track & Field, said she could be on her way to approaching that time, and

soon.

"Marion Jones, in 1998, is where Carl Lewis was in 1982 — already recognized as one of the world's best but really only starting to realize her potential," Masback said. "I think when she talks about the possibility of five gold medals at the Sydney Olympics [in 2000], it should not be dismissed."

Like Lewis, Jones also excels at the long jump, which she has entered at the Prefontaine Classic, but the 100 remains her marquee

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The Game is on at Doc's!!

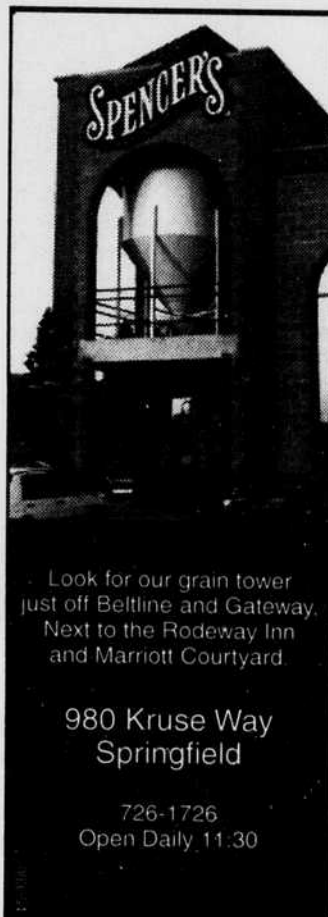


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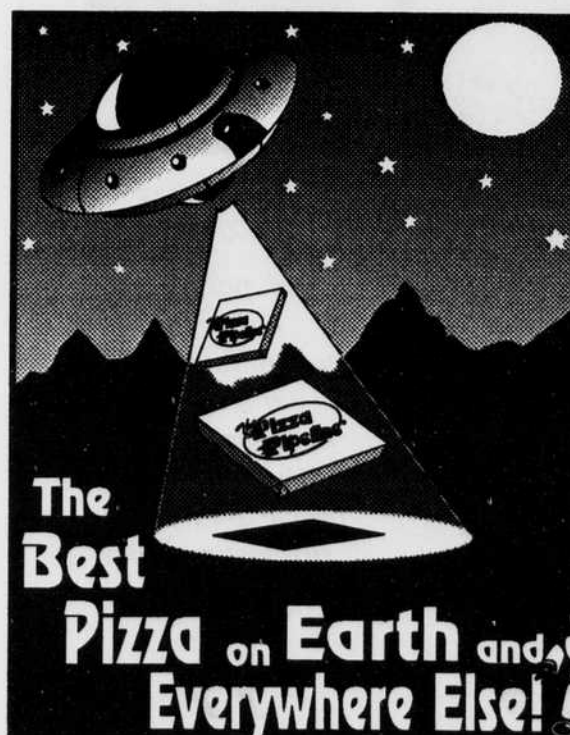
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