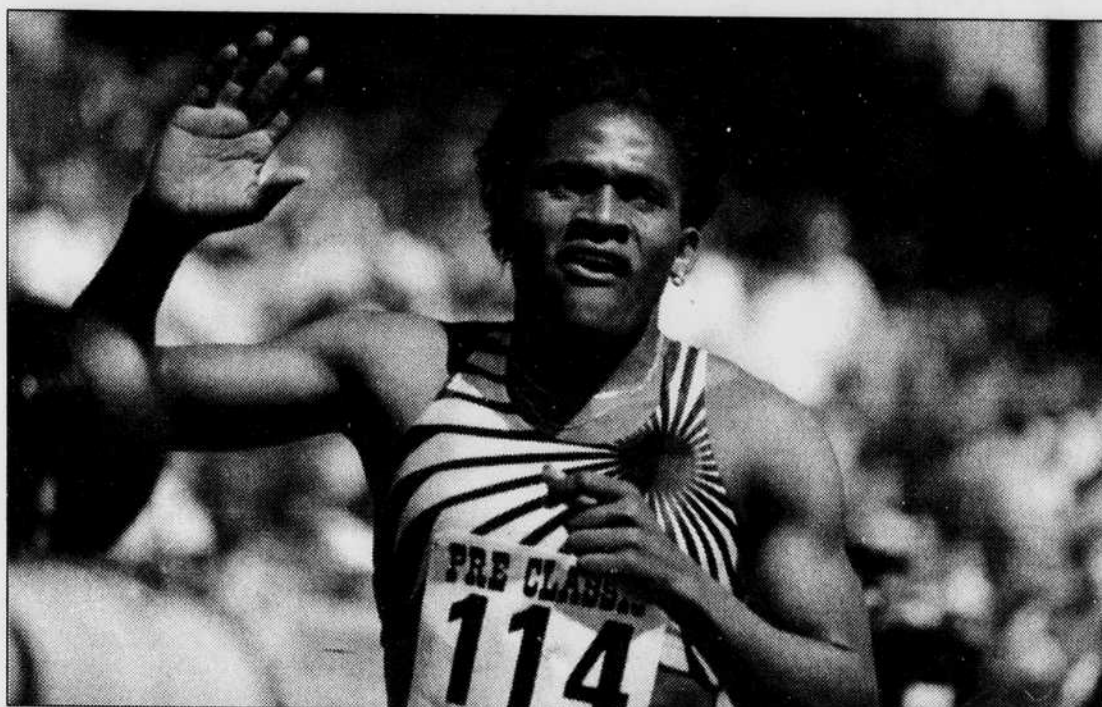


1998 PREFONTAINE CLASSIC



Maria Mutola celebrates her meet record 800-meter effort at last year's Prefontaine Classic.

EMERALD

Women: Slaney opts not to run in 1,500

Continued from Page 3B

In fact, the 10.71 run by Jones in Chengdu, China on May 19 was the fifth-fastest time in history, preceded only by four times by Griffith-Joyner.

Finishing third in that race was Jamaican Chandra Sturup, who will also run at Hayward Field on Sunday. Sturup finished fourth in the 100 at the 1996 Olympics.

Strong fields are also scheduled for the 400- and 1,500-meter races this Sunday.

Ana Quirot's meet record of 50.14 seconds in the 400 could be in jeopardy this weekend at the Pre, which will feature the top three finishers from last year's World Championships.

Cathy Freeman of Australia, the gold medalist at Athens last year with a time of 49.77, recently announced her entrance into the Prefontaine's 400 field. Freeman joins Jamaica's Sandie Richards, second at the World Championships in 49.79, and American Jearl Miles-Clark, the third-place finisher at the World Championships in 49.90.

But the strongest field of runners this weekend could be in the 1,500, which features four of last year's top 10 women in the world, as well as seven of last year's top eight Americans.

Leading the pack is Regina Jacobs, ranked second in the world and the silver medalist at the World Championships last year. Joining Jacobs are American Suzy Hamilton, ranked fifth in the world, Canadian Leah Pells, who is ranked ninth in the world and finished fifth in the World Championships, and Kenyan Jacqueline Maranga, who is the fourth-ranked woman in the world but who has run the fastest time in the world so far this year.

One woman who chose not to enter the 1,500 field at the Prefontaine Classic is Mary Slaney, who instead will run the 5,000 on Sunday.

"I thought about [running the 1,500], but I think for running a long distance race like the 5,000, there isn't a better place in the country to do it," Slaney said. "In the 5,000, it really helps to have the crowd behind you and the excitement of the meet. I really thought that this would be the best opportunity to try and run a fast five."

Like Slaney, 800-meter runner Maria Mutola trains at Hayward Field and holds the meet and track records in her event.

Mutola set her record in 1997 with a time of 1:57.57. She won the World Championship in 1993 and holds a PR of 1:55.19.

One of the most competitive races of the day should be the women's 100-meter hurdles, which will feature four former Olympians and five athletes with World Championship experience. Dionne Rose should be the favorite in that race, as she enters the Prefontaine Classic with a PR of 12.64, a half-second better than the rest of the field.

Finally, joining Jones in the long jump will be four former Olympians, including Oregon alum Kelly Blair. Jones has already jumped 23 feet, 1 3/4 inches this year, but both American Sharon Couch and Bahamian Jackie Edwards have leapt more than 22 feet.

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