

Rhythm & Reviews

Friday, October 2, 1998

Red Hot '60s

Neil Simon's *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers* premieres at the Lord Leebrick Theatre Co. / PAGE 16

Let's go to the movies

Area movie houses offer a broad range of cinematic moods and movie magic / PAGE 19

Oregon Emerald

Volume 100, Issue 24

PRE RUNS AGAIN

The latest film about Oregon runner Steve Prefontaine was screened in Eugene last weekend and will hit theaters later this month

By Amy Boytz
Oregon Daily Emerald

The red carpet isn't rolled out for just anyone, but then again, Tom Cruise isn't just anyone.

Last Friday, the mega-star was in town to attend the Eugene screening of "Without Limits," the story of legendary University of Oregon runner Steve Prefontaine.

Cruise, clad head-to-toe in black, greeted swarms of screaming fans and flashed his million-dollar grin often, despite the buckets of rain.

Cruise does not star in "Without Limits" — he produced it, along with Paula Wagner of Cruise/Wagner Productions. "Without Limits" follows "Mission: Impossible," the company's first production.

But what drew Cruise to Prefontaine's story?

"A lot of people feel inspired by human accomplishment," Cruise said.

Along with Cruise, actor Donald Sutherland also attended the premiere. Sutherland ("The Dirty Dozen," "Ordinary People," "A Time to Kill") plays former Oregon track and field

coach Bill Bowerman. Also appearing were co-producer Wagner, executive producer/co-writer Kenny Moore and director/co-writer Robert Towne.

Prefontaine, who attended the University from 1969 to 1973, was famous for his aggressive, strong-willed attitude and rock-star charisma.

To capture the essence of Prefontaine on film would be difficult. But this film comes close.

The movie, filmed almost exclusively at the University during the summer of 1996, beautifully depicts the campus.

Watch for footage of many University students and faculty in bit parts. It has a believable screenplay that portrays

Without Limits

Directed by Robert Towne

■ TYPE: Drama

■ CAST: Billy Crudup, Donald Sutherland, Monica Potter

■ RATING: ★★★★★

the intensity of Prefontaine, Bowerman and the art of running.

But what is most remarkable about Without Limits is its casting. Billy Crudup ("Sleepers," "Inventing the Abbotts") plays Prefontaine perfectly. To prepare for the role, he studied hours of Prefontaine's races on film to emulate Pre's every arm motion, head turn and crowd-pleasing gesture. Crudup spent additional time on the track

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Actor Billy Crudup runs in front of Hayward Field fans as Steve Prefontaine in a scene from 'Without Limits.'

Courtesy photo

'Urban Legend' comes out flat, lacks scares and spice

'Urban Legend' links a talented cast to a unique concept, but it fails to inject new scares

By Michael Burnham
Oregon Daily Emerald

Recipe for a hip 1990s horror flick:

- One or more costumed killers with creative license to hack up hapless victims
 - A young, attractive and well-scrubbed cast of rising stars
 - A female lead, who must be able to use her wits and kick some serial killer butt
 - Lots of blood, cleavage and college student stereotypes
 - A catchy premise
- NOTE: a suspenseful plot is optional

If that's the formula for a contemporary horror film hit, then Phoenix Pictures' latest production, "Urban Legend," will no doubt be a success.

The premise for directing newcomer Jamie Blanks' film has the makings for a cinema cash cow: urban legends, or modern-

day folk tales of semi-plausible mishaps, start to come true at a pretentious New England college. The film falls flat as Blanks fails to inject suspense into a choppy, predictable plot. But if you don't mind a brainless and gory whodunnit, this film is sure to please.

"Urban Legend" pulls together a cast of skin blemish-free characters that includes Jared Leto from "Prefontaine"; Robert Englund from "Nightmare on Elm Street"; Joshua Jackson from television's "Dawson's Creek"; Rebecca Gayheart from "Scream 2" and Noxzema commercials; and Alicia Witt from television's "Cybill."

The film's mayhem begins when red-headed heroine Natalie (Witt) begins to find her friends dying in ways that eerily shadow urban legends. As Natalie's friends and



Actress Tara Reid, who plays the disc jockey of a campus sex advice show, has a grisly encounter with a hooded serial killer in 'Urban Legend.'

Courtesy photo

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