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Prefontaine honored with track dedication

■ The track, blazed by the famed runner, winds through Alton Baker Park

Signs mapping the running trail envisioned by former Olympic and University track star Steve Prefontaine will be unveiled today at 12:30 p.m. at Alton Baker Park.

The three signs offer a brief history of Prefontaine's running career, along with pictures and maps showing the distance of various loops of the trail. Prefontaine blazed this trail while training for various track meets before his death in 1975 at age 24.

Prefontaine's parents have been invited to unveil the signs, and speakers from the city of Eugene

and the Oregon Track Club will commemorate the occasion. The unveiling takes place off Leo Harris Parkway, across the footbridge directly behind Autzen Stadium. Today is the first day of the USA Track and Field National Masters Championship at Hayward Field.

More than 1,500 Masters athletes from all over the country will be competing at the three-day event.

Partners in the sign project include the Oregon Track Club, the Oregon Track Club Masters, the Steve Prefontaine Foundation, the city of Eugene and Willamalane Park and Recreation District.

For more information, call the Oregon Track Club at 687-0588.

From staff reports

Organizing

continued from page 1

between the two, in addition to demanding full disclosure of company information and independent verification systems to investigate possible unfair labor conditions at those companies' factories.

The 180/MDE is also a campus-based group, and organizers say it strives for a more active political presence among students, while opposing corporate influence on universities and society.

Eugene was chosen to host the conference, said Rachel Miller, a

conference and discuss their participation in a campus-wide strike to protest the privatization of Mexico's education system.

The nine-month protest, which began in mid-April 1999, was organized to defend free tuition and the right to higher education for working class and poor students. The protest ended Feb. 6 with the arrest of approximately 750 students, professors and their supporters.

USAS members want to "connect more with international student struggles ... and bring those student perspectives to this country," said University of Wisconsin student and USAS member Molly McGrath, who is in Eugene to help with the conference's set-up.

"I think it will be a really good learning process for a lot of students here, especially students that have been working on anti-sweatshop issues. Students that are going on delegations to Mexico City, to talk with workers and unions, [can] bring the issue of education and student struggles to them.

"There's a lot of differences geographically between these different campuses, but it's great to come here and work with organizations such as [Oregon's farm-worker rights organization] PCUN, organizations from the Bay Area and just to network."

The influx of so many activists does have the campus police on alert, said Eugene Police Department officer Edward Tsui, who is assigned to campus detail. Although the EPD is not going out of its way to prepare for the conference, the goings-on will be watched.

"Anytime you have a large political gathering [on campus] ... we're going to be monitoring the situation," he said.

Jacobson said that since the conference is designed to develop both programmatic direction and organizational structure for USAS and 180/MDE, registrants must be affiliated with one of those groups to attend. However, the five days won't just be "preaching to the choir," she said.

"Because it's a joint conference, people are going to be learning a lot about contemporary issues surrounding education with 180/MDE and about globalization in general and worker rights in general with USAS," Jacobson said. "So there's going to be exchange [and we] hope students will go back to their campuses and share that information."

For registration information on the conference, call the Survival Center at 346-4356 or visit www.usasnet.org to register online.

"I think it will be a really good learning process for a lot of students here, especially students that have been working on anti-sweatshop issues."

Molly McGrath
USAS member

USAS national organizer, because the two organizations have strong affiliations and representation at the University. The decision to meet here came well before the early April protests outside of Johnson Hall by students who wanted University President Dave Frohnmayer to sign on with the Worker Rights Consortium, a labor-monitoring organization.

The fallout from that decision, Miller said, does make Eugene a more intriguing location, however.

"The fact that [Nike CEO and President] Phil Knight pulled his \$30 million made the choice all the more interesting," Miller said from the nation's capital, referring to Knight's April 24 decision to withdraw personal donations from the University, including a pledge of funds to help with the Autzen Stadium expansion.

With University administration officials recently expressing concerns about the WRC's stability, Miller said the topic will get a share of attention at the conference.

However, she noted that since the past year has been a successful one for USAS, with many universities signing on with the WRC, "there will definitely be celebrating" at next week's gathering.

Organizers are also expecting several students from the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (UNAM) to attend the

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