

# Written in Stone

**TRACK FANS MAKE PILGRIMAGE TO PRE'S ROCK**

BY DANTE ZUÑIGA-WEST

**H**ow do you quantify a legend? How Sasquatch is Bigfoot? How Loch Ness is Nessie? In the realm of legend, it's nearly impossible to gauge magnitude — how golden is Eldorado and how deep is Atlantis?

In the sports world, where myth and legend remain forever tangled by statistics and star-power, legend status is hard-earned, and just as unquantifiable. Is there a measuring stick big enough to do justice to those giants of athleticism, like Jordan or Seles, who heroically rise above all things mundane and capture our admiration? Such figures seem to transcend our speculations and enter another domain — a pantheon.

“Touch the rock, Wyatt, go ahead and touch it,” the mother of aspiring track runner Wyatt “Wheels” Newell says. Camera in hand, she is standing in the middle of the road, near the corner of Birch Lane and Skyline Boulevard, at “Pre’s Rock” — the place where the life of Eugene’s greatest legend, track star Steve Prefontaine, came to an end. This rock is the shrine at which his name has been immortalized, literally set in stone.



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