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In Retrospect



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By BLAINE NEWNHAM  
Register-Guard Sports Editor

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## UCLA, Oregon go 1-2 in NCAA meet

# Pre completes sweep; Mac wins

By BLAINE NEWNHAM  
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**BATON ROUGE, La.** — Steve Prefontaine and Mac Wilkins said goodbye to the University of Oregon Saturday by leaving the impressive legacy of a second-place finish in the NCAA track and field championships, the Duck's highest finish since winning the meet three years ago.

For Pre, it was the same as it was three years ago in Des Moines, Iowa. Another three-mile title, the fourth in four years and the prominent place in track history as the only athlete ever to win four consecutive titles.

Running even faster in a searing 4:14 final mile, Pre broke his NCAA meet record of Thursday by winning in 13:05.3, despite 80-degree heat.

"If it hadn't been for the humidity," he said, "I think the American record (Gerry Lindgren's 12:53.0) would have been in jeopardy."

"I know there's more there," he continued. "For the first time since the Twilight Meet I haven't had trouble with my back."

"Now I want to go out and show the Europeans I'm better than fourth in the world."

**BIG MAC**, gaining stature as one of the premiere discus throwers in the world, won rather easily with a throw of 203-11 and was most impressive with a foul of 210-6.

His discus title was worth 10 points, which added to his third-place in the shot gave him more points than any other competitor in the meet.

Mac's 16, Pre's 10, a fourth by Craig Brigham in the decathlon (four points) and Steve Bence's sixth in the 880 (one) gave the Ducks 31 points.

UCLA's talented Bruins had no trouble winning their third straight NCAA title with 52 points. Brigham Young and Arizona tied for third with 26, Tennessee was fifth with 24, and Texas-El Paso and Kent State were sixth with 22.

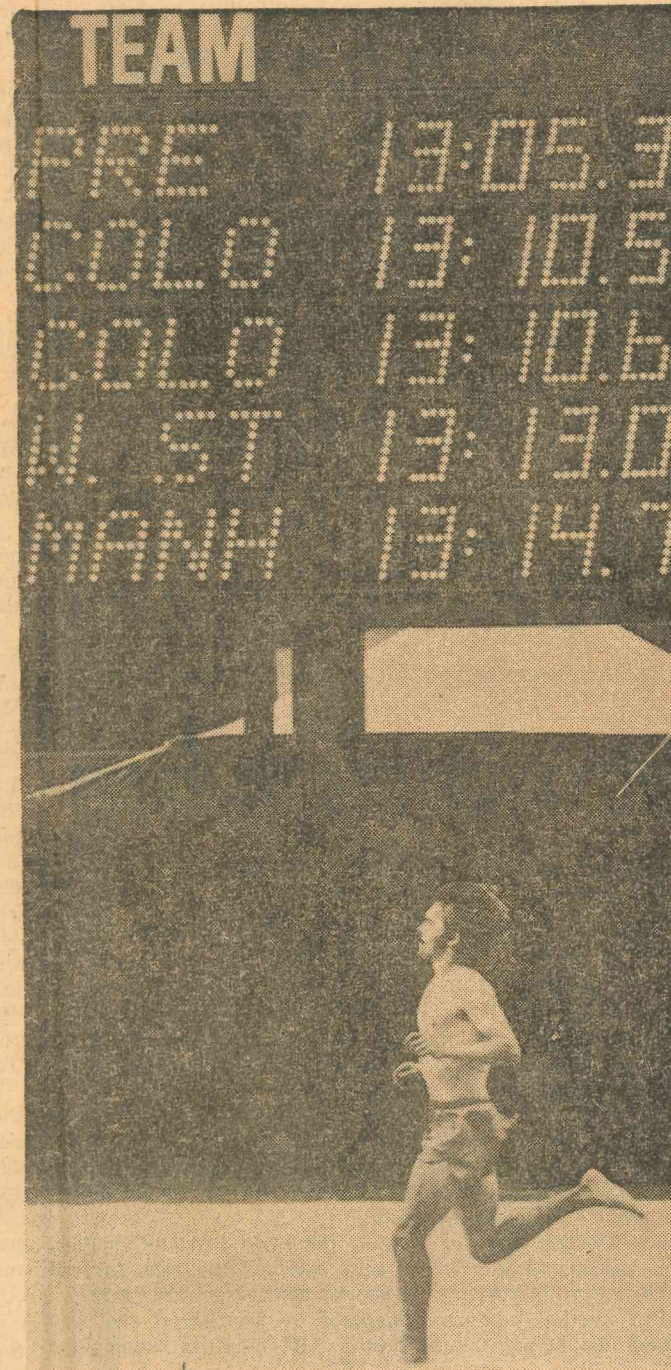
The second-place finish here was a notch higher than the Ducks finished in the Pac-8. No other Pac-8 team was in the top 10, but Oregon State did place third among conference schools with 12 points as Tom Woods was second in the high jump to Reynaldo Brown — both clearing 7-4 — and Hailu Ebba was fourth in a mile that saw Dave Wottle win in 3:57.1 and eight men go under four minutes.

Washington State and California each had 10 points, Pac-8 runnerup Southern Cal had but nine, and Stanford and Washington did not score.

**THE FINAL DAY** of competition began inauspiciously for the Ducks, who had high hopes of points in the steeplechase and mile.

Todd Lathers, the talented junior with the second fastest time in the field, began slowing down in the middle of the third lap and was dead last in the steeplechase final with a time of 9:50.2. He has run 8:35 this year.

The race wasn't much better for Oregon State's Leonard Hill, the Pac-8 champion, who was 10th, and teammate Rick Goldner, who was 13th.



(AP Wirephoto)

The temperature actually cooled during the afternoon. "It was neat," said Pre. "When I stepped on the track the clouds came over and it cooled off. It was just like in Eugene last year. It was a cold, cloudy day and when I stepped on the track the Sun came out."

**PRE SHOULD** have such control of the weather. Lathers, Knut Kvalheim and Mark Feig didn't.

"You can't blame the heat," said Lathers. "I went into the race with the attitude it would be run on time. I don't know what it was, except I knew I was ready mentally to run."

"Physically there was nothing there. I've been tired all week. I don't want to make excuses but I've had a sore throat. I was dead after the first 220 . . . I just don't know, except that I was mentally ready."

Wottle left no doubt that he is still America's most talented middle distance runner, blowing by a mile field that surprisingly let the pace drag.

Kvalheim and Feig had shown a capability to score in the mile final, Kvalheim even to win. But as the pack began the charge home off a 3:03.8 three-quarters, the two Oregonians fell back.

Knut was seventh in 3:58.9, Feig 10th in 4:03.0. Ebba actually knocked a 10th of a second off his lifetime best with 3:57.8 for fourth. Tony Waldrop of North Carolina and teammate Reginald McAfee were second and third in 3:57.3 and 3:57.8.

"**I KNOW IT** would have been a different race at night," said Dellinger. "You know our guys would have done better." Feig was upset.

"It had to be the weather," he said. "You try to get ready to run, but the heat just makes you tired. I got about 10 blisters on my feet, and you can't move in this stuff."

"I know Knut feels the same as I do . . . what a dumb place to run a meet."

Feig, a sophomore, looked up.

"Where's the next meet? Austin, Tex. Wow."

Ebba seemed relatively pleased with his finish.

"I thought I could win," he said. "I went with 330 to go which was my plan but I couldn't get my legs up."

"Was it hot? I warmed up for 15 minutes and started to melt."

The 880 was a shocker as Pac-8 champion Rick Brown had no kick to call upon in the last 220 and just barely nipped Bence for fifth place. Skip Kent of Wisconsin ran 1:47.2 to win.

"I thought I could have done better," said Bence. "I guess yesterday took a lot out of me. I couldn't believe it when I saw Rick Brown there. I thought he was God. I guess he can be beaten and maybe I'll be the next to do it."

Dale Scott of WSU, the talented freshman, was eighth in the race in 1:49.4.

**WOODS MADE 7-4** on his third high jump try to force the height to 7-5. Neither he nor Brown could make that height and Brown got the title by virtue of not missing at 7-4. OSU's Jim Judd, the leading javelin qualifier at 258-0 until the flight was rained out on Thursday, finished seventh in the final with a throw of 244-7.

"I'm sore and tired," he said. "I lost a little of the edge

The scoreboard tells the story

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**ANYWAY, BILL BOWERMAN** has already received clearance from the NCAA to run amateurs against two or three members of the International Track Association (ITA). Now Oregon needs only the approval of the AAU.

Bowerman said a month ago that the ITA, which presumably wants to someday hold a pro meet in Eugene, offered to help with the restoration. Bowerman asked if they would send some of their middle distance runners, namely Keino and Ryun.

The pros, if they come, would apparently do so for just expenses, not prize money.

Pros or no pros, there will be a meet.

"We've got commitments from Mike Boit (fourth in the Olympic Games 1,500 meters from Kenya) and sub-four-minute miler Bob Maplestone, plus Benny Brown and the best of UCLA's team," said Ritchey.

"We're in the process of contacting all the top finishers in this meet. Rick Brown of Cal and pole vaulter Dave Roberts (an 18-footer and the NCAA champ) have also indicated they want to come."

**THE BIG QUESTION** mark, however, is Pre, who is scheduled to leave for Europe on the 19th with Dave Wottle for a meet in Helsinki, Finland.

"I might stay in Eugene for the meet," said Pre, "but I'm not sure.

"A lot depends on what happens at the AAU meet (the previous weekend in Bakersfield)," said Pre. "If they don't give me a travel permit I'll probably not run there, come up to Eugene and run in the June 20 meet and then go to Europe . . . on my own, and with or without a travel permit."

Pre's declaration of independence from the AAU's planned European tours met with the approval of Jim Bush, the UCLA coach who will head the American team this summer.

"If the older, proven athletes go off on their own it will allow our younger kids to make the trip and compete internationally," said Bush. "I think it's great. Our team this year might not be as strong as it would be if we had Prefontaine and Wottle, but we'll be better off in 1976 at Montreal."

Pre agrees.

"We've got to get the international experience. I've run five years for my country on a team. Now I want to run for me. I don't want to have a meet once a week and travel with 60 other people. I want to run every three or four days and against the best."

**PRE CONTENDS** that the AAU has had its chance at getting American athletes international experience and blown it.

"If the athletes don't take the initiative in this," he said, "who will? We know the AAU and the American Olympic Committee won't.

"I hate to sound critical, but to me the AAU is just a bunch of old men taking medication so they can stay alive for another four years to hassle us.

"Right now I'm being hassled. I don't need it, really."

Even though his acid comments concerning the heat and humidity of the south preceded him, Pre was idolized by the southern track fans.

His last two laps of the three-mile were cheered by a sweaty crowd of 8,200 which had come to its feet. They called for a victory lap.

"Other than Eugene and possibly Berkeley," he said, "these are the best fans I've run before."

And his final mention of the heat went something like this:

"Never losing a collegiate track race in four years and being the first person ever to win an event four years in a row gives me kind of a warm feeling inside.

"This is quite a way to go out. It's a fantastic feeling."