

EUGENE, OREGON, SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 1973

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## Duck star just misses American record

# Unexcited Pre turns in 12:53.4

BAKERSFIELD — For a man who had just run America's second fastest three-mile, Steve Prefontaine sounded very nonchalant.

"My heart wasn't really in this," the Oregon senior said minutes after he had toured 12 laps on Memorial Stadium track in 12:53.4 to win the three-mile championship in the 85th annual National AAU Track and Field championships Saturday night.

Still, Pre had come within .4 of a second of Gerry Lindgren's 1966 U.S. record and had become the world's sixth fastest three-miler.

Dick Buerkle of the New York Athletic Club finished second in 12:59.8 to equal the ninth-fastest three-miler and John Hartnett was third in 13:06.4.

Despite those lofty marks and shattering his previous best of 12:58.6, Pre insisted he "had just been running to win.

"The meet," Prefontaine said, "there just wasn't anything to it. The announcer was putting people to sleep."

But the crowd of 9,200 didn't fall asleep watching Pre and others perform. Five meet marks were set during the evening, including Dwight Stone's winning high jump effort of 7-5, which equalled the fourth best performance ever in the event.

Meanwhile, world record holder Rick Wohlhuter raced to the second fastest 880 time by an American this season — 1:45.6 — as he defeated Dave Wottle (1:46.2), and Doug Brown of Tennessee sprinted past Barry Brown of the Florida Track Club on the straightaway to become the second fastest American steeplechaser of all time (8:26.8). Barry Brown took over the No. 3 spot with his 8:27.1 clocking.

In other meet records, John Craft of the University of Chicago Track Club shattered the triple jump standard with a 55-8 $\frac{3}{4}$  effort and Jim Bolding ran the fastest 440-yard intermediate hurdles in the U.S. this season (49.2). Bolding's time for 400 meters was 48.8.

The mile also was a fast one as Len Hilton pulled away from Marty Liquori in the final 60 yards to win in 3:55.9. Liquori was second in 3:56.8, while Chuck LaBenz took third and Tommy Fulton was fourth, both in 3:58.0.

Oregon Track Club's Mark Feig was next in 3:59.4, a personal best, and the Ducks' Scott Daggatt clocked 4:00.7 for seventh, another personal mark.

But the top Oregon performance, aside from Pre's mark, belonged to Big Mac, discus thrower Mac Wilkins, who threw 211-11 to take his specialty. The effort was off Wilkins' stadium record of 212-6 set Friday night in qualifying but the NCAA champ said he was pleased with his overall series, which he termed his best ever.

After becoming the No. 2 collegiate discus thrower of all time Friday night, Wilkins had throws of 202-7, 211-11, 208-8, 205-0, 198-1, and 208-3 Saturday night.

John Powell placed second in the

event with a throw of 209-5 and former Oregon Stater Tim Vollmer claimed third off a top effort of 203-8.

In other events involving Oregon athletes, Tom Woods of Oregon State cleared 7-3 $\frac{1}{2}$  to place second behind Stone in the high jump, Paul Geis was fourth to Pre in the three-mile (13:09.2), and Leonard Hill of Oregon State placed eighth in the steeplechase in 8:45.6.

Todd Lathers of Oregon dropped out of the steeplechase 30 yards from the beginning of the third lap and Oregon State's Clay Lowrey was a non-placer in the 880.

Prefontaine led the first lap of the three-mile in 66.3 seconds and stayed ahead until 9th place finisher Mario Perez of Mexico took over at the mile running 4:23.1.

"I didn't want them to dally around," Pre said of his early pace-setting effort. "I wanted them to work for it."

But after Perez had enjoyed the lead for a mere two laps, Pre was

back in front. And he stayed there, pulling ahead of Buerkle by about 10 yards with a half-mile to go and increasing the margin to 40 yards before sprinting the final lap in 59.2 seconds.

"That was a pretty hard effort," Pre said. "The competition was very good. Buerkle ran a hell of a race."

Steve Williams won the 220 in 20.4 seconds to go with his 100-yard dash title of Friday night and was named the recipient of the Dieges Award as the meet's outstanding athlete.

As in the NCAA championships, Maurice Peoples of Arizona State and the D.C. Striders won the 440, this time in 45.2. UCLA's Benny Brown finished third in 45.9, trailing Cal International teammate Karl Farmer, who set a national junior college mark of 45.8. Farmer is a freshman at LA Southwest Junior College.