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Six-mile, 10,000 records fall

Pre steals show with U.S. marks

By JOHN CONRAD
Of the Register-Guard

Steve Prefontaine got his two American records in the Twilight Meet at Hayward Field Saturday. But for the fact he wanted both, the former University of Oregon sensation might have had his first world record.

Prefontaine romped through six miles in 26:51.8 to break his own American mark of 27:09.4 by almost 18 seconds and come within less than five seconds of the 26:47.0 world standard that Ron Clark established in 1965.

He felt he would have had it except for the fact he also had his sights set on Frank Shorter's American mark of 27:51.4 for 10,000 meters. So, rather than kick hard at six miles, Pre continued on and wiped out Shorter's mark easily with a 27:43.6 tour.

PRE'S SIZABLE imprint in the world distance running lists now read like this: In addition to being sixth in the world at three miles and ninth at 5,000 meters, he is now third in the world at six miles and sixth at 10,000 meters.

And these are statistics which will probably only improve.

"I'll start concentrating on some world records now," Pre promised. "I think this indicates I'm ready.

"I could have gotten the six-mile today if I was going that far. I would have sprinted the last lap and there would have been no problem. I didn't look that bad the last lap of the 10,000, did I?"

Pre's performance took much of the thunder away from some other outstanding marks, especially in the Twilight Mile, ordinarily the attention hog in this meet.

How Pre rates

Six Miles

26:47.0—Ron Clarke, Australia	1965
26:51.6—Dave Bedford, G. Britain	1971
26:51.8—Steve Prefontaine, USA	1974
26:57.8—Lasse Viren, Finland	1972
27:10.2—Dick Taylor, G. Britain	1969
27:11.6—Billy Mills, USA	1965
27:11.6—Gerry Lindgren, USA	1965
27:14.6—Naftali Temu, Kenya	1966
27:18.0—Juha Vaatainen, Finland	1971
27:20.8—Gordon Minty, G. Britain	1973

10,000 Meters

27:30.8—Dave Bedford, G. Britain	1973
27:38.4—Lasse Viren, Finland	1972
27:39.4—Ron Clarke, Australia	1965
27:39.6—Emiel Puttemans, Belgium	1972
27:41.0—Miruts Yifter, Ethiopia	1972
27:43.6—Steve Prefontaine, USA	1974
27:48.2—Mariano Haro, Spain	1972
27:51.4—Frank Shorter, USA	1972
27:52.8—Juha Vaatainen, Finland	1971
27:53.4—Jurgen Hasse, E. Germany	1971

NOTE: All 1972 marks in 10,000 meters came in Olympic finals at Munich.

IN THAT ONE, Paul Geis didn't seem to suffer from a hangover of any sort from his three-mile last weekend and held off Mark Feig to win in 3:58.1. Geis' time was one-tenth of a second off his lifetime best, but Feig's 3:58.5 was his best ever — as were the next seven finishers. In order, they were Todd Lathers (4:00.2), Gary Barger (4:02.4), Steve Bence (4:02.9), Peter Spir (4:02.9), Bob Rust (4:03.1), Randy James (4:03.2) and Lars Kaupang (4:04.2).

Other notables included Stan Whigham's lifetime best of 14.1 in the high hurdles; Terry Williams' lifetime best of 28:03.0 in the six-mile, which is the second fastest ever by a Duck and 42 seconds faster than he's ever gone before; Tom McChesney's 8:57.0 in the steeplechase; and others including Ross Blackman's 24-10½ long jump, Mac Wilkins' 192-7 discus

and Craig Brigham's NCAA-qualifying 7,238 in the decathlon.

NOTHING REALLY spurred the estimated crowd of 7,000 until the 10,000, though, and then things started with a quick bang as Mike Manley jumped quickly in front and led Pre through the first seven laps prior to dropping out. It was an arrangement borne out of a number of developments not to Pre's liking.

"Mike and (Knut) Kvalheim were going to run all six," Pre explained. "But Mike had a virus and then Knut got sick and couldn't run. I called Mike and he said what if he just helped out for the first mile.

"I told him if he helped for a quarter it would help."

Manley stuck it out for 7½ laps and Pre was on his way. He ran at world-record pace through the half-way point but then slowly dropped back and eventually lost his chance for no other reason than he couldn't kick it home the last lap as he did later to finish the 10,000.

MANLEY'S FIRST mile of 4:26 was the fastest of the six. Pre then passed the two-mile mark at 8:54 and the midway point at 13:24, better than a lot of winning three-mile times. His miles the rest of the way were 4:28, 4:30 and a final 4:29.8 without a finishing kick.

"I just added one more record to the books," Pre said. "Now I can go after the mile, and believe me, that's not that far off if I can get some help early in the race."

Records and eventually success in the Olympics are about the only things left for Pre. While his times at Oregon weren't to be sneezed at,

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(Register-Guard photo by Wayne Eastburn)

Pre negotiates turn en route to American record