

Going solo

By **BLAINE NEWNHAM**
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SOMETIMES YOU question Steve Prefontaine's manners, although not necessarily his logic.

"I will run only one race in the NCAA track championship," he said back in March.

"It appears to me that the members of the committee that selects these sites are thinking of a vacation rather than a meet.

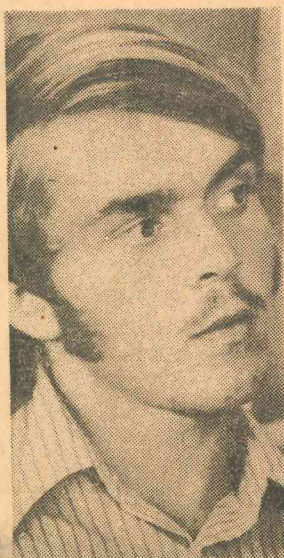
"It's too darn hot there."

The temperature Wednesday in Baton Rouge, La., was 90 degrees. The grits and blackeyed peas were soggy with sweat and you wore a fluffy white towel around your neck instead of a tie.

The NCAA meet brochure from Louisiana State University says rather triumphantly:

"The Sunny South Beckons."

It may beckon those who want to soak up Al Hirt and mint juleps on a Bourbon Street terrace, or pluck shrimp from the creole, but not those who run three miles, or six miles, or 3,000 meters over tall



PREFONTAINE

wooden barriers.

Bill Dellinger, the Oregon coach who did a little distance running himself, validated Pre's boycott.

"He'll run just the three-mile," said Bill. "We did a study of the average temperature and humidity and it's just not feasible to double. Or desirable for that matter."

PRE ISN'T THE only one going solo. Bob Grubbs, the freshman, will run only the three-mile, while Knut Kvalheim, Mark Feig, Scott Daggatt and Gary Barger will stick to the mile.

Imagine an NCAA championship six-mile without an Oregon entry.

The average temperature this time of the year in Baton Rouge is 79 degrees. The humidity is at least that high.

Most of the meet will be run with a certain amount of sanity, although the heavy hand of television will once again pre-empt common sense.

The decathlon, which runs Tuesday, June 5, and Wednesday, June 6, will start each day at 4:30 p.m. And running events on Thursday and Friday will not begin until 6 p.m.

On the final day, however, the steeplechase is at 3:30 p.m. to begin running events and the last event — the mile relay — is at 5:20.

That scheduling, of course, is the work of ABC's Wide World of Sports, which undoubtedly is paying a fat fee to do the meet live.

Their announcer had better approach Pre with trepidation at the conclusion of the three-mile, scheduled to start at 4:55, the time any civilized Cajun is sipping a drink in the shade of a magnolia tree.

Pre will be candid, if not caustic.

ONLY ALBERT HEARVEY will be doing double duty in Baton Rouge, and he may well run nine races for the Ducks.

Hearvey is scheduled in the 100, 440 relay and mile relay. All three will probably necessitate heats, semifinals and finals.

Dellinger has some reason to believe that the Ducks can score heavily in both relays, perhaps even win the short relay.

"With the lead we had in the Pac-8 final," said Dellinger, "I don't think there was any way Don Quarrie could have overtaken Albert."

But he did.

"Albert came up to me Saturday morning and told me he had a sore leg," explained Dellinger. "All day long he had to just stride through races. With the start he got in the 100, I'm not sure Quarrie would have caught him had Albert been able to finish like he usually does."



ALTHOUGH TIMES slowed considerably in the second day of the Pac-8 track championships, Stevenson Track was up to its old tricks Friday with Don Quarrie's wind-aided 9.1 and the legal 20.2.

It was during last year's NCAA championships that Jim Bush, the UCLA coach, called the track at Hayward Field "the fastest in the world."

And there is evidence to support that.

Dale Annis, a reader from San Francisco, has computed that only the track at Mexico City has felt more world record races. The 1968 Olympic Games, running in the thin air of mile-high Mexico City, produced world metric records in the 100, 200, 400, 800, 400 relay and 1,600 relay. The 1972 Olympic has four records, the 400-meter intermediate hurdles, the 400-meter relay, the 100-meter high hurdles, and 10,000 meters.

Eugene, on the other hand, has five records without benefit of an Olympic Games and the attendant relay races combining the national talents of the best runners in the world.



ROBERT SCHEFFEL, the pole vaulter from Halsey, has his bags packed for the World Games for the Deaf in July at Malmo, Sweden.

"We've raised \$1,000 for him," reports Tinker Hatfield, the coach at nearby Central Linn High. "They say he needs \$2,000 to go and represent the United States."

Scheffel, a student at Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C., made the American deaf team last summer by vaulting 13 feet. If you want to help him clear the final height, they have a Robert Scheffel Olympic Fund at the Citizen's Bank of Oregon, P.O. Box 312, Eugene.