

# Pre among many favorites in outstanding 5,000 field

By DAN BERGER  
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MUNICH, Germany — Jim Ryun's third crack at a gold medal may be overshadowed this year by a race most consider potentially the greatest at the XXth Olympiad — the 5,000-meter run.

America has two fine entrants in Steve Prefontaine and George Young, the latter competing in a record fourth Olympics, never before done by an American distance runner. But the two, along with Leonard Hilton, face as many as 10 others each of whom should break the Olympic record of 13 minutes 39.6 seconds.

**IN FACT, THE** predictions are that it'll take at least 13:40 just to make the finals.

Meanwhile, Ryun appears a solid choice in the 1,500-meter run, the metric

mile. In 1964, the teenaged Ryun failed to make the finals. In 1968, at high-altitude Mexico City, he lost the gold to Kip Keino of Kenya and finished second.

Keino is back this year, reportedly planning to triple in the 1,500, the 5,000 and the steeplechase.

Ryun, 25, has not approached his world record 3:33.1 in years and even in winning the U.S. trials at Eugene, did only 3:41.5. But his form was good, his feet flashed as of old and experts said Ryun had returned.

**HIS TOP** competition could come from Francesco Arese of Italy or a host of Englishmen. Bob Wheeler and Jerome Howe round out the American contingent with both having recorded sub-3:40 times this year. Ryun has done 3:52.8 in the mile this year.

The 5,000, however, is the race of the Games.

Prefontaine set the American record of

13:22.8 in winning the trials at Eugene with Young second in 13:29.4. Both times pale in light of Dave Bedford's 13:17.2, second best ever recorded and only six tenths off the world mark set by Ron Clarke in 1966.

Bedford, the brittle-tough Englishman, had not planned to run the 5,000 this year until he blazed the fast time at London.

**FINLAND'S ONE-TWO** punch of Lasse Viern and Juha Vaatainen, with life bests of 13:18 and 13:32.6, England's Ian McCafferty and Ian Stewart and Russia's Rashid Sharafyedinov, as well as five East European runners make the race even tougher to predict.

One man who could win it all, however, if he competes, is Ethiopia's Mirus Ifter, a virtual unknown last year who showed explosive power in the Pan-Africa Games at Durham, N.C.

The 10,000 is also talent-laden, with Bedford heading the list. His 27:52.8 ear-

lier this year is the fourth best time in history, the same time in which Vaatainen won the European title in 1971.

Finland's Viern blazed 27:52.4 for No. 3 on the all-time list earlier this year and should be the favorite but the tactics of the race may be too much.

America's Frank Shorter has a shot if the former Yale and Florida Track Club star sets a hot pace and stays in front. Shorter doesn't have the late speed of the Europeans. In fact, Shorter's lifetime best of 28:12 was set earlier this year at the AAU championships as he ran second to late-kicking Greg Fredericks of Penn State.

**MIKE MANLEY IS** the top U.S. entrant in the 3,000-meter steeplechase and he has the best chance of winning the event of any American since Horace Ashenfelter did 20 years ago.

The 30-year-old Eugene school teacher is a true veteran of the event with a

lifetime best of 8:27.6, second best ever by an American.

Unfortunately, more than a dozen men have run faster than that this year already, including world record holder Kerry O'Brien of Australia, whose mark of 8:22.0 could fall.

Bronislaw Malinowski of Poland has already done 8:22.2 this year with Anders Garderud of Sweden and Kazmierz Maranda of Poland recording fast times of 8:23.6 Bulgaria's Mikhail Zhelev has run 8:25.4.

Keino's 8:30.0 in his first attempt at the steeplechase shows he could surprise this good field. He's pulled rabbits out of hats in the past.

**THE CLASSIC** marathon, all 26 miles of it, is probably the least predictable race because of the hundreds of entrants, the lack of standardization in courses around the world and the few competitions held prior to the games.

Still, Shorter and Ken Moore, America's top two entrants, are real veterans of long, long distance running and could give the favorites — Ron Hill of England, Lutz Phillip of West Germany, Dave McKenzie of New Zealand and Derek Clayton of Australia — a run for the gold.

The best time on record is 2:08:33.6 by Clayton. If Munich — Shorter's birthplace — is clear and cool, the runners might approach that mark.

Four years ago at Mexico City, the 7,439-foot altitude hurt most distance runners except the high-altitude-trained Africans. In fact, four years ago a Kenyan won the 1,500, a Tunisian followed by two Kenyans and an Ethiopian ran 1-2-3 in the 10,000, two Kenyans ran 1-2 in the steeplechase and an Ethiopian won the marathon.

Similar happenings are not likely this time around.