

Pre turns in brilliant two-mile

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PORTLAND — Steve Prefontaine didn't duel Jim Ryun. He knocked him off his feet with a first-round kayo and then added the indignity of lapping the world mile record holder in Saturday night's Oregon Invitational Indoor track meet at Memorial Coliseum.

A record gathering of 10,066 reared its approval as Pre set an American collegiate indoor record of 8:26.6 with a wire-to-wire two-mile victory.

It was only a formality that Pre was named the meet's outstanding athlete for the second year in a row; the crowd gave him a standing ovation during two brisk victory laps to leave no doubt who their choice was.

"It's a good start for the year," Prefontaine said afterwards on a night which is exactly six months from the opening day of the final Olympic Trials in Eugene.

Ryun, who said before the meet that he felt he owed Oregonians a good race after his disastrous 10th place finish in the "Twilight Mile" last spring, is still in debt.

With a half-mile to go in the race, Pre looked around for Ryun, whose

head was bobbing and weaving. Ryun was a half-lap behind.

"I really was disappointed in his race," Prefontaine responded to a question about Ryun, who was fourth in 8:47.2.

"I figured he'd be more ready than that."

Ryun stayed in contention for the first six laps in the 22-lap race but then started falling back as Pre went unchallenged through an opening 4:16 mile.

"I had hoped somebody else would take the lead," Prefontaine continued. "I kept moving over for Kerry Pearce to take over but he wouldn't."

Prefontaine disclosed later that he was shooting for an 8:22. He had hoped the first mile would go by in 4:12.

"I started moving with six laps to go," he continued. "My last half was 1:59 and my last lap 57. Sure I could have run faster if somebody had taken the lead."

Although Ryun was not a primary factor in the race, give him an assist.

With two laps to go, Pre became aware that he could lap Ryun. You could see the glint in his eye from the balcony.

The crowd came to its feet as Pre charged by Ryun with a little more than a lap to go. Ryun looked for a minute as if he'd put up a fight.

But it wasn't there.

Pre's 8:26.6 battered the collegiate record of 8:27.2 set by Pearce, sixth in the race. Pre just missed Frank Shorter's American indoor mark of 8:26.2.

Gerry Lindgren, although never challenging for the lead, ran a consistent race of 8:35.1 for second and Rex Maddaford from East New Mexico State was third in 8:38.5.

Although Prefontaine and the crowd was disappointed in Ryun, Ryun wasn't.

"I'm happy with the race I ran," he said. "I felt fine."

"I came up here to find out where I was in my training. I wanted a tough race and that's what it was. Steve ran a brilliant race."

"My best two-mile indoors is 8:38, so I'm just not much of a two-miler anyway."

While Pre was the hit of the evening, Al Feuerbach stepped up to erase Randy Matson's meet record in the shot with a toss of 68-6¼ and Kjell Isaksson of Sweden went 17-3 in the pole vault to crack the meet

record, of 17-1½ by Chris Papanicolaou in 1969.

Lost somewhere in this carnival they call indoor track and field were some promising performances by University of Oregon athletes.

John Mays, transfer from Lane Community College who prepped at Lincoln in Portland, finished sixth in a quick 60-yard dash field.

Two other UO sprinters, John Swainson and Al Hearvey, didn't make the final.

Mays, who was third in his heat in 6.2 to edge out USC's Willie DeKard for the final qualifying spot, also ran 6.2 in the final. He trailed a field of Warren Edmonson of UCLA (6.1), Terry Lavery of Washington (6.1), Leon Brown of USC (6.1), Eddie Hart of Cal (6.2) and former Oregon State star, Willie Turner (6.2).

Oregon Coach Bill Bowerman was pleased with the effort by Mays, and that of senior Wes Smiley, who gave Mark Winzenried a good stretch battle before finishing second in the 1,000. Winzenried won the race in 2:30.8, Smiley second in 2:09.9 in beating NCAA finalist Marcel Philippe of Fordom.

Another bright Oregon spot was Mac Wilkins, the javelin referee, who

threw 60-1½ in the afternoon's developmental meet. It was the first time he had surpassed 59 feet as well as 60.

He won himself a berth in the evening shot put and was sixth with a throw of 59-0¼. Teammate Pete Smock was third (62-3¼).

There were some scratches and disappointments.

Frank Shorter and Lee Evans, both of whom competed Friday night in New York, didn't show and high jumper Reynoldo Brown, also a New York competitor, gave a token effort in the high jump, finishing third at 6-10.

USC sprinter Don Quarrie scratched because of a pulled muscle and Doris Brown dropped from the women's mile because of the flu.

In the high school competition, North Eugene won a stiring stretch battle with Hillsboro in the two-mile relay. The Highlanders were timed in 8:11.8 to 8:12.6 for Hillsboro.

And Jerry Zyback of Thurston upset a highly-touted field in the prep 60. His electronic time of 6.39 was enough to edge state champion Rick Eatmon of Adams who was timed in 6.45.