



Pre: The Story of America's Greatest Running Legend, Steve Prefontaine

By Tom Jordan

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The story of America's greatest running legend.

For five years, no American runner could beat him at any distance over a mile. But at the age of 24, with his best years still ahead, long-distance runner Steve Prefontaine finally lost. Driving alone at night after a party, Prefontaine crashed his sports car, putting a tragic, shocking end to the life and career of one of the most influential, accomplished runners of our time.

More than 20 years later, Pre continues to influence the running world.

From his humble origins in Coos Bay, Oregon, Pre became the first person to win four NCAA titles in one event. Year after year, he was virtually unbeatable. Instead of becoming one of the new breed of professional track athletes, Pre chose to stay amateur and fight for the adequate funding he felt American amateur athletes deserved.

A man of incredible desire and energy, Pre trained relentlessly. In his drive to be the best, he spurred others to do their best. As one racer said, "He ran every race as if it were his last."

But Pre not only touched runners; his exciting technique as well as his maverick lifestyle made him a favorite of the fans. A race with Prefontaine in it was automatically an event.

His brief but brilliant life - documented by author Tom Jordan - is the tale of a true American hero.

This is his story.

"Some people create with words or with music or with a brush and paints. I like to make something beautiful when I run. I like to make people stop and say, 'I've never seen anyone run like that before.' It's more than just a race, it's style. It's doing something better than anyone else. It's being creative."--Steve Prefontaine

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Written in 1977, this biography was evidently resurrected because of a recent TV special and two planned motion pictures about the Oregon long-distance runner, whose life was cut short in 1975 when he crashed his sports car at age 24. The book gives details of Prefontaine's efforts on the track?where he set many national records, some even while in college?and demonstrates his dedication to running, but it tells readers little about his personal life, perhaps because, as Jordan points out in the introduction, "His pace was so frenetic... that his deep friendships outside of family and love relationships were few." The two major problems Pre encountered as an athlete were his inability to do as well in Europe as at home and his annoyance with the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) and its demand that amateur athletes accept no formal support, although, the author notes, many meets gave under-the-table payments to top box-office draws. Jordan, who is on the staff of Track & Field News, captures his subject's charisma, but his book seems incomplete. There are six sidebars about Prefontaine by noted runners including Alberto Salazar, Mary Slaney and Frank Shorter. Photos. (Apr.) FYI: The film Prefontaine is playing at theaters now. Disney will release a film on the runner later this year.

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From [Booklist](#)

University of Oregon track star Prefontaine finished fourth in the [5000 meter] race at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Beyond that, he set numerous American records. But it was his personality, not his records, that set him apart. Where his opponents were dry and colorless, Pre was brash and cocky. His tragic death in a 1975 one-car accident established him as the James Dean of distance running, and the release of two 1997 motion pictures about him secures this status. Jordan's updated edition of a 1977 biography is acceptable as sports bios go, but there are too many stride-by-stride race accounts. Still, Jordan does create a vivid sense of Prefontaine's driven personality. Peppered throughout are revealing comments from rivals, teammates, and coaches, including legendary Oregon track coach Bill Bowerman. On balance, this is an intelligent glimpse of an athlete who is destined to be more well known today than he was in his lifetime. Expect demand. *Wes Lukowsky*

Review

"Pre inspired a whole generation of American distance runners to excel. He made running cool. He created the whole idea of training really hard and going for it. Runners setting goals for themselves, wanting to go all out and be really tough. That was his example." ?*Alberto Salazar, former American record holder in the 5,000 meters, 10,000 meters and marathon*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Colleen Holden:

Do you one among people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained in the straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This Pre: The Story of America's Greatest Running Legend, Steve Prefontaine book is readable through you who hate the straight word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving actually decrease the knowledge that want to provide to you.

The writer of Pre: The Story of America's Greatest Running Legend, Steve Prefontaine content conveys the thought easily to understand by most people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content material but it just different in the form of it. So , do you continue to thinking Pre: The Story of America's Greatest Running Legend, Steve Prefontaine is not loveable to be your top listing reading book?

Cindi Russell:

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Wm Dunlap:

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with pals is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Pre: The Story of America's Greatest Running Legend, Steve Prefontaine, you are able to enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout people. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

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