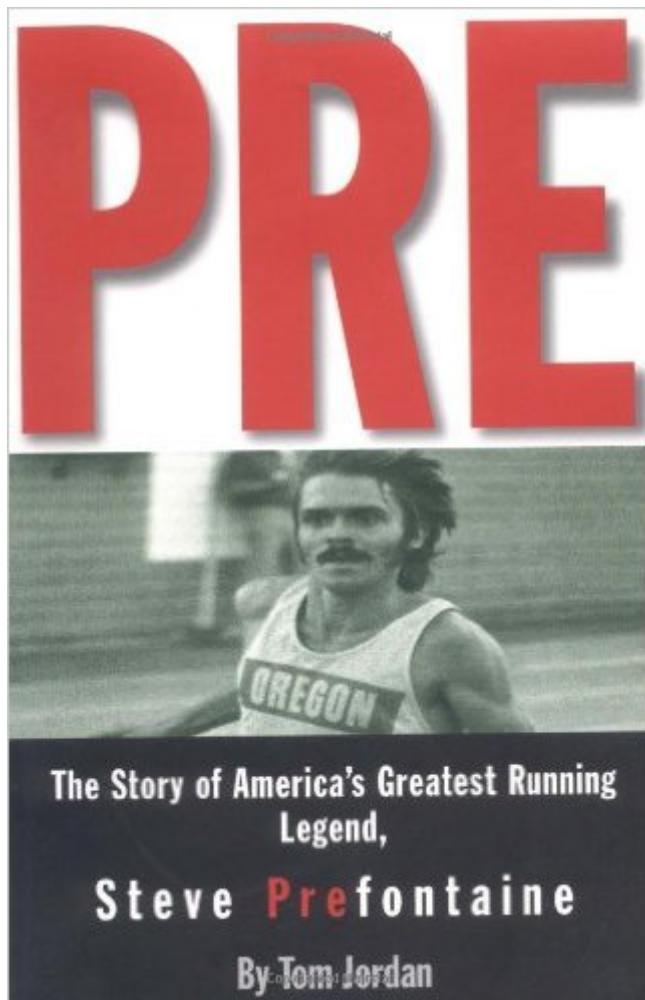


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Pre: The Story Of America's Greatest Running Legend, Steve Prefontaine



Synopsis

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

Book Information

Paperback: 168 pages

Publisher: Rodale Books; 2 edition (March 15, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0875964575

ISBN-13: 978-0875964577

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (124 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Next to my Mother who raised me Steve Prefontaine is my only hero. For the last 23 years I've been a distance runner and there's been plenty of days when it hasn't been easy. But everytime I pick up this book and read a few pages I'm out the door before I know it. This book isn't just about the greatest distance runner that the US ever produced. It's about believing in yourself and giving all you have no matter what you do in life. I have an old copy that sits on my desk and no matter how many times I read it I'm still inspired. Steve Prefontaine lives on through this book. It tells the story of not only his triumphs on the track but off it as well. His legacy are the people who he touched and embrace what he stood for, courage.

I loved this book and it is very easy to read. This book up to today is still my favorite

In PRE, Tom Jordan uses common and simple language to chronicle the life of the incredible Steve Prefontaine. Whereas this book does not attempt to be a literary masterpiece, Mr. Jordan has done the reader an enormous favor by putting between covers this heartbreakin story of remarkable human will and spirit, by which we may all feel motivated and empowered and certainly inspired. Of special significance to me, a native Oregonian, is the fact that Steve Prefontaine was a true Oregon boy from a small Oregon town. Steve's characteristics of being independent, hard working, a bit of a rebel, and charismatic all at once, embody the pride and essence of what it means to be a true Oregonian. The story of PRE makes me want to live each day more fully in some way, rather than to simply exist. For the athlete and non-athlete alike, this story is well worth reading. It may even change your life.

"To give anything less than your best is to sacrifice the Gift"--Steve Prefontaine. In his work 'Pre: The Story of America's Greatest Running Legend", author Tom Jordan skillfully weaves this nexus quote, along with numerous other anecdotes and observations from Pre's contemporaries, to form a rich and informative tapestry in words of the life of Steve Prefontaine. Jordan's narrative is a balanced blend of objective race results and the subjective, and at times highly emotional, recollections of the people who knew Pre the best; his friends, family, and, perhaps most importantly, his competitors. From his humble origins in Coos Bay, Oregon to his untimely death in a 1975 car-crash, the book follows Pre through his workouts and training, his glory days at the University of Oregon, his 4th place finish at the 1972 Munich Olympics, his battle against "shamateurism" and the Amateur Athletic Union, to his work for the then fledgling Nike. In the end, the reader is left with the images of both Steve Prefontaine the runner---spirited, fiery, and

driving---and Steve Prefontaine the man---caring, dedicated, energetic, and independent. This book will be enjoyed by both runners and non-runners alike. As Pre said: "Some people create with words, or with music, or with brush and paints. I like to make something beautiful when I run...it's style...it's being creative." Tom Jordan's work not only captures the essence of the revolutionary Steve Prefontaine but also ultimately measures up to his lofty paradigm.

First off, I would like to say being a distance runner for my school's cross country and track teams that Steve Prefontaine is my idol. The way he ran with such confidence and finesse, and how he never second guessed going full-out during a race, even though it may have cost him some races at the end was truly remarkable. This guy had guts, and lots of it, he was also a colorful icon in the running world, much like Pete Maravich and Julius Erving were to the game of basketball. He was brash and cocky and was always in a bad mood when he didn't win a race but was also very friendly and became a popular figure in Oregon and later on, in America. Now, about the book, the minute I began reading the first chapter, I felt like I was watching an episode of ESPN Classic's Sportscentury: The Top 50 and Beyond. The way they interviewed people who knew Pre and gracefully described his races stride by stride really made this book hard for me to put down. The book, while short (only 166 pages, and that includes the 25 pages of photos approximately) is nonetheless, sweet and a very good read. However, I would not recommend you waste the [money that] this book costs, unless you are a diehard and just want to add this to your enormous book collection, borrow it from your local library instead, they ought to have a copy of it.

Tom Jordan's book Pre: the story of america's Greatest Running legend Steve Prefontaine, is a very inspiring story of the life, and tragic death of one of the greatest American distance runners ever. The book starts before Steve (as he was called then) even began running. In Jr. High when he saw the High School cross country team run by he said "What kind of crazy nut would spend two or three hours a day just running?" Soon he became hooked on running. And the story takes off from there. Tom Jordan's writing in places still gives me chills every time I read parts of the book. The description of Pre's Olympic 5000m final is one of these sections. Even after reading the book over ten times, I still get chills reading the chapter on this race. If it was possible, I would have rated this book a 15, but the scale only goes up to 10. If you are a runner of any kind, even a sprinter, or someone who jogs every morning, and could never break 9 minutes for the mile, I would suggest reading this book. Perhaps it will inspire you to run faster, and set a new PR. I'm going to end this review with the same sentence that Pre used to end talks to children: "To give anything less than

your best is to sacrifice The Gift."

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