

KYRIAKIDES GIVES AMERICA CREDIT

Tells Arthur Duffey He Was Under- weight and Under-Nourished When He Came Here

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I won. I would have died had I not. When I crossed the finish line I cried out two words, "For Greece!"

For Greece and for my wife and children!

(Editor's Note—At this point in his narrative, Kyriakides broke down and wept. I have seen many athletes weep before in victory and in defeat. Some were wonderful actors. This noble Athenian shed real tears, tears right from his strong Grecian heart. A heart that didn't weaken for more than 26 miles, but which nearly burst at this point amid a mixture of pride and sorrow at the recollection of the years of hardship his country has recently endured.)

Just before the race I received a letter from my daughter, Helen, who is 3 years old. I also have a son, Demetrios, who is 18 months old. My wife is named Eugenia, and my mother is also alive. She lives in Cyprus, where I was born 36 years ago last January. My family is in Athens, where I am employed as a bill collector for the electric company.

The letter from my daughter in her own childish writing wished me luck today. It was what you would call an inspiration to me.

ALL CREDIT TO AMERICA

But I must once again give credit to America for my victory. When I came to this country two weeks ago, I was underweight and weak. My Greece, you know, is starving. You have so much here in America. But my people have so very little to eat. . . .

(Editor's Note—At this point Kyriakides wept again.)

Here, though, I have had steak for the first time in eight years. Before the race I ate steak at quarter after 9 in the morning. All that helped me to put on several pounds, so that I weighed 134 pounds when the race started. Without the weight I could not have won.

My thanks to America.

When I came here to run in 1938 I made one great mistake in my training. I ran only on the soft fields of my native land

Helen, who is 3 years older than I, is now 18 months old. My wife is named Eugenia, and my mother is also alive. She lives in Cyprus, where I was born 36 years ago last January. My family is in Athens, where I am employed as a bill collector for the electric company.

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This year I trained on the gorgeous mountains of my country. Every day before I left for America I would run over a mountain near my home. Over and back again. It was rough land, rocky and jagged. My running shoes are all scratched and cut from the stones sticking into them.

COBBLER FIXED HIS SHOES

Three days before the race I had one of your cobblers put new soles on my shoes. He fixed them well, but I told him not to take out the tiny pebbles that were stuck in the groove by the sole. They were pebbles from Greece and they brought me luck.

This training made my feet hard. There is not a blister on them now that the race is over. They were not sore at all.

I never felt better in my life than I did during the race. I was confident that I would surely win.

All the way along the route I timed myself with a watch that I wore on my left wrist. It is a watch I bought in London many years ago. Every five miles I looked at the watch to keep time on myself. I was pleased each time. I was very pleased with my time of 2 hours 29 minutes 27 seconds.

Never before in my life have I done better than 2 hours and 40 minutes.

With more good food I think I might break the record of 2 hours 26 minutes 51 1-5 seconds. I do not know. But I think so.

Editor's Note—Here Johnny Kelley, who finished second, said, "You certainly would, Stan. You certainly would.")

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In the race I first of all decided to watch Gerard Cote. "Stay with Cote," I told myself, and I did over the first several miles. But soon I noticed that Cote was not to be the one. Then I thought it would be Robbins, and I watched him.

When we came to the hills, I knew it would be Kelley whom I must beat. He was running well. I know very well how good he is. I stayed with Kelley.

When we came down your Beacon street side by side, I was not worried when he began to pull away from me, ever so little. I knew that I had what you call stamina. I was ready. I was confident.

Then came a moment when someone in the crowd cried out, "For Greece." And my mind told me over and over again: "For Greece. Run. Run for Greece."

TORCHES BURN IN GREECE

When I passed Kelley and began to draw away from him my confidence was rewarded. Along those final miles I could think only of the joy in Athens when the news arrived there. I thought of the torches burning on the Acropolis as a sign of my victory. I thought of my wife and my children.

Now I shall take the laurel wreath, which I brought here with me in 1938, back home to Greece. I shall spend about one more month here, touring your country with my good friends trying to raise funds for athletic equipment for my native country. There we do not have any athletic equipment at all. I would like to have even your cheapest and second-hand equipment to take to my countrymen so that Greece may take its high place in the world once again in the next Olympic games.

My thanks now, though, to my good friend Demeter. My thanks to all my friends—to the Greek cook who fed me the steaks—to the thousands who cheered me during the race.

My thanks again to America—for myself and for Greece!