

# KYRIAKIDES—PRIDE OF GREECE

I was a few minutes before the appointed time when I arrived at the Psichiko home of Stellos Kyriakides, 37-years-old world famous marathon runner, and pride of the sporting Greeks. I was invited into the house and in the minutes I had to wait for his arrival, I fell into the usual trap of conjecturing what this renowned figure would look like. Would he be big or would he be small? Would he look the part? And so it goes on.

In the course of several years sports writing and reporting, it has been my privilege and pleasure to meet quite a number of the world's famous sportsmen. Always the same thing happens. You may have seen a hundred and one photographs of the man you are interviewing but, nevertheless, you usually find that the photographs have given you the wrong impression. So it was that I awaited the arrival of Kyriakides.

Now a marathon runner to my mind, a man who pounds over the 26 miles 385 yards course, must, of necessity, be a man of great physical strength. To cover that distance in two and a half hours is a superhuman feat. As I waited I recalled the great performance of Kyriakides last year, when at the age of 36, he made athletes from all over the world look like novices and won the Boston Marathon with a remarkable time, only seven seconds outside the world record.

I had been in the house for about five minutes, examining a massive show-case of trophies which he had amassed during his athletic career of 13 years, when he arrived.

In he walked, a frail little man,

Greece the home of the "MARATHON" race is still producing men to match the performance of that original Greek warrior who brought the news of the Persian defeat from Marathon to Athens. Kyriakides is the greatest modern exponent of long distance running. DAVE COLEMAN gives a pen picture of the man in this article,



Kyriakides is seen above training at the White City, London, before one of his many appearances in British marathon races. He is a popular figure with British followers of athletics, thanks to his many great performances throughout Europe.

couple of minutes later when he was telling me laughingly how the American doctor had examined him before the Boston Marathon last year, and had been so worried by the sight of his weak looking frame, that he had seriously suggested that Kyriakides should withdraw from the event altogether.

Kyriakides started running 13 years ago in Cyprus, and his long career has been studded with brilliant victories in nearly

national obligation to give the Nazi salute, he little realised that several years later this little compulsory act would serve him some useful purpose.

When the Nazi invaders overran Greece in 1941 they visited the house of Kyriakides with the intention of confiscating his possessions. Fortunately there happened to be a photograph of Greece's famous athlete lying nearby, and this moved the Ger-