

Kyriakides Knows Only Kelley

Mr. Stylianos Kyriakides of 15 October st., Athens, Greece, a grayly handsome man approaching 60, peered out the window of his Hotel Lenox room. He recognized everything as totally strange to him.

Across the street, where once he showered and met the press after winning a dramatic Marathon, the bulldozers had flattened the brick topography.

Around the corner to the left towered a building which filled his eye. It hadn't been there the last time. A movie house, in which he once put aside his pre-race tensions for a few hours, was no more.

After 22 years, Boston was different; the Marathon was different—"But Johnny Kelley is the same; he still runs," sighed Mr. K. with the relief one feels upon encountering a familiar landmark. "I cannot wait to see him once more."

The Kyriakides vs Kel confrontation of 1946 provided one of the great stories of the Marathon — the emaciated, starving Greek against the cherubic hometown favorite.

Before that epic struggle the Greek had said, "The legs are weak, but the heart is strong!" and he had been right. He captured the race on "heart" and dramatized the plight of poverty-stricken, starving Greece after years of German occupation.

"This is long ago," said Mr. K. yesterday, "but in my mind it is often merely yesterday. I can still count the steps I took up Exeter st to the finish."

Kyriakides retired 30 days ago from the electric-power company by which he had been employed for many years. Thus, as a member of the Greek A.A.U., he is "baby sitting" the first American adventure of a new Greek runner, Dimitrious Varous.

"You will see some good running Monday by this boy," Mr. K. said, "although the Japanese to run here are very, very good."

Kyriakides, now 59, runs no more. Jogging is not a big item in his homeland. He said, "It is not usual in my country to keep on running when you are old. We have one — a runner who came with me when I was last here in 1947 — Ragazos.



KYRIAKIDES

"He is past 50 now and will compete in a race they now have in Cologne, Germany, for the old people."

Mr. K's last strides in competition were taken at the London Olympiad in 1948, which was the last time I ad seen him until now — although we'd kept in touch.

Time has been kind to him since the April night at the old Globe uptown on Washington st., when he stepped into the sports department. I did not recognize him then as the handsome young Greek with whom I'd become friendly in '38 in his first attempt at the Marathon here.

"I am Stylianos Kyriakides," he had said, "and you are shocked. For this you are not to blame. Few will recognize me now."

And he told of the brutal, hungry years of the German occupation, when he had sold his fine clothes, and silk shirts and his footwear and, finally, even his home.



JERRY NASON



"It was necessary to do this," he said, "to keep food in the bellies of my wife and children."

The Greek government, he admitted, had provided him with an extra ration, that he might find the strength to train for the 1946 Marathon in Boston. He arrived—gaunt as a Biblical character. The Demeters brothers got a few fat steaks into him. Two weeks later he performed his Miracle of the Marathon.

"Things are now well with me," he said Tuesday. "My son is finishing his course in naval architecture in England. He moves to Glasgow University for his master's degree next year.

"One daughter is a secretary for the Shell Petroleum Company in Athens. The other is married. Her husband is employed at the American embassy and, behold, my grandson is thus an American citizen.

"As for me, I feel young. I like to think I look young."

He looked around in vain for all the old familiar sights in the area of Exeter st. The race doesn't even finish there these days. He sighed and said, "I want to see Johnny Kelley. As soon as possible I want to see Johnny Kelley."

It will be like Old Home Week when those two foregather.