



STYLIANOS (STELIOS) KYRIAKIDES

“The Champion, The Patriot, The Humanitarian”

**“HIS LIFE, HIS ACHIEVEMENTS
AND HIS ETERNAL WORK”**

There is more to the marathon, than running the 26.2 miles

Dimitris Kyriakides



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AND HIS ETERNAL WORK”**

Researched and written by

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STYLIANOS KYRIAKIDES



MARATHON CHAMPION, PATRIOT, HUMANITARIAN.

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Motto of the 26.2 Foundation, www.26-2.org

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1. ABOUT THE DIMITRI KYRIAKIDES FAMILY

This book was conceived and written by Dimitris Kyriakides, the son of Stylianos Kyriakides, with contributions from his immediate family.

In late 1993, early 1994, I gave in to an inner urge that pushed me to go clean up the loft in our family house where I grew up, and where I was living with my family at the time. While clearing and throwing many things out, I found hidden in a corner two big cardboard boxes containing material that my father had been collecting throughout his adult life, since the age of twenty-one, of which no one knew the existence of. The material consisted of whole newspapers, newspaper clippings, photos, letters, brochures, invitations, runners' athletic gear and other items dating back to 1931. Till today I can only imagine why my father had never told any of us anything about this "treasure".

When I started going through the boxes more carefully, I understood that I had discovered a "gold mine". I realized that I had to first put this material in order, so that I could eventually create an archive that would be called the "STYLIANOS KYRIAKIDES ARCHIVE". I knew that this would need time to be done correctly. Uninterrupted time.

At that time in my life, because of my profession as an independent Marine Consultant, and "trouble shooter", I was travelling all over the world for about 6-8 months a year, so I did not spend much time in Greece. I decided to ask my daughter Emily to start the work for me. Emily did so, and was doing a good job, but she had to stop because she had to leave Greece to travel to the UK to start her studies at Sussex University in Brighton, where she would study Media. Everytime I came back from an assignment, I would do some work. But I soon realized that this was not the solution. The material that I had discovered was very mixed up and each piece of paper I picked, needed careful study, first to be put first in chronological order and then to be evaluated. Most importantly, I realized that if I didn't pick up the pace, I would never finish.

So, I decided to take a break from work for a few months and concentrate on the task. It took me about 7 months, working 18/7 to put the material in some order. The more I searched and studied the material, the more I was amazed. But most of all, I was amazed at how in 1931, a young man from the poor mountain farming village of Statos, Cyprus, who had left school at the age of fourteen, thought at such an early point in his life and his athletic career to start collecting EVERYTHING.

Most of the original material is in digital form, and both versions were given to the new library of the UNIVERSITY of CYPRUS for research in 2017.

This material is the basis for the research and the writing of the books about Stelios Kyriakides, in English, Greek and Chinese, as well as for the over 15 Greek and International documentaries already made, with the NBC documentary "The journey of a warrior" winning the EMMY award in 2004.

There is also a movie under development that will hopefully be released soon by the

“1821 Media” company, a Hollywood company owned by my friends Paris Kasidokostas and Terry Douglas. 99% of the material that one can find in the web since 1995 comes from this archive.

Since then, I have spent a lot of time putting the material in better order, by researching, finding new material and speaking to many people who knew him or admired him. This work will never end as long as I live, because I always come across something new.

I must, however, point out that some information found on the internet, has been altered and is not accurate. It is a common occurrence these days that people, either out of overexcitement or other reasons, alter the information or the story “to suit their needs”. This is neither correct nor acceptable.

The writing of this book was dictated by the need and wish to present to the world not only the athletic achievements of my father, but also the particularly important Patriotic work he did in the years during WWII and after the civil war, up to 1949, but also the Humanitarian work he did after he stopped running until he died in 1987.

For me it was also important to present not only his athletic achievements but also his very advanced and far forward-looking athletic training and running techniques, his patriotic and humanitarian work in detail, as well as his Eternal work through his spiritual legacy after he left this world in 1987. There is no doubt that, during the 30s and 40s, my father was one of the best long-distance runners in the world. What is striking about him is that he was also 50 years ahead of his time worldwide, in training and running techniques, healthy dieting and strict athletic living standards. I always say when I speak about him, especially to young people, *“to be a champion is not that difficult, what is difficult and unusual is to be a visionary, looking far ahead of your time and to use your abilities for the good of people and society”*.

This is what makes Stelios Kyriakides exceptional, a person out of the ordinary, considering that he was never a rich man. It is especially important also to understand the times during which he achieved all these things. Although in 1946 he was offered the opportunity to stay in the United States with his family and make very good money as a professional athlete or as a movie actor, my father used his fame for the benefit of his country and the Greek people. This is what he did all his life. The word “I” was not part of his vocabulary, he always thought altruistically and used the word “WE”.

The first book about my father, titled “RUNNING WITH PHEIDIPPIDES” was published in English in 2001 by Syracuse University and was written by two friends, Nikos Tsiotos and Andy Dabilis. Many facts and details of the story were based on the SK archive. Nick came to Greece in the summer of 1995 and stayed with me in my house for almost four weeks looking into the material I had interviewed my mother, my two sisters and me, among many other people. Later I visited him in Boston and checked the content of the book for accuracy.

Andy, being a journalist, had access to the files and archives of the American

newspapers of the times, so the information in the book, is both detailed and accurate. But the book ends in Boston 1947 and there is almost nothing about the rest of my father's life and achievements.

In 2014, I wrote a book in Chinese, as I was living in Shanghai at the time. The book contains all his life and work, and it was a great success.

I hope that this book will benefit the readers and change their life for the better.

The Kyriakides team involved in this book consists of my daughter Emily Kyriakides, my son Stelios Jr. and my ex-wife Susan.

Emily knew her grandfather as a young girl, meeting him every day, as we lived only 600 yards apart. When he died she was thirteen years old. Emily studied media and is involved in international film productions, with 62 long and short films as well as documentaries. (Search EMILY KYRIAKIDES in Imdb.com). In 2014 she was invited to Windsor Palace by the Queen of England and praised for her contribution to the British film industry. Five of her films were nominated for OSCAR and BAFTA awards in 2012 and 2014.

Stelios Kyriakides, my son, like Emily, knew his grandfather well. He was 12 when he died. Stelios is a British Diplomat and in 2007 he was awarded the IRAQ MEDAL by the Queen of England, for taking part in the reconstruction of Bagdad, after the 2003 war.

My ex-wife, Susan Kyriakides and I, met while we were both studying at Strathclyde University in Scotland in 1969 and were together for 25 years. We are still very good friends. My parents loved her like a daughter.

Sophia Grinezou, who edited this book, is a young talented girl that teaches English.

I want to thank them all for helping me achieve my life-long dream.

Dimitris Kyriakides



1986, Stelios Sr. and Iphigenia with Dimitri, Stelios Jr, Susan, and Emily

2. THANKS

I want to thank all the known and unknown people, those who were friends and those who helped my father, Stelios Kyriakides, in his athletic career but also in his life. I am also thankful to all those that are now helping to promote his legacy after 1987.

To my Grand Parents, John, and Helen Kyriakides, for giving birth to and raising this incredible person, my father.

To my Mother and Father, for being the best parents in the world in very difficult times.

To Dr. Reginald Cheverton, the British Doctor of Limassol, for whom my father was working as a house boy from 1929 to 1931, and who introduced him to running and guided him through his first steps.

To all the people at the "Olympia" Athletic Club of Limassol, founded in 1892, which he joined in 1932.

To the Cyprus and the Greek Athletic Federations, that helped and supported him throughout his running years and after.

To Mr. Leslie Kemp, the GM of the British Athens Power Company. It was because of him that my father was able to travel to compete in the Boston marathon in 1946.

To the local Town Committees of the beautiful Filothei suburb, where he lived since 1943 until his death, who believed in him and together they created a good living environment in the area for future generations.

To Kostas Sabatakakis, a great supporter of the SK legacy, who was the first person in 1989 to organize an annual race event in my father's memory, in the mountain village of Pyrgos in the province of Corinth, where my father is buried.

To Andreas Angelides, the Ex-Governor of Limassol, who in 1994, formed the "STELIOS KYRIAKIDES" long-distance running club in Cyprus.

To the members of the "STELIOS KYRIAKIDES" Running club in Cyprus, for their contributions to the spreading of his legacy.

To the cities of Marathon, Filothei and Pyrgos in Greece, Hopkinton Mass., in USA, Pafos and Statos in Cyprus, where his statues and memorial plaques stand in prominent locations.

To all the cities in Greece, Cyprus, the USA, and the world that have honored him and are promoting his legacy.

To the BAA, the organizers of Boston marathon, for honoring my father in 2006.

To the organizers and the local authorities, of the “7.7K Kyriakidia” race in Pyrgos, the “Alexander the Great marathon” of Salonika, Greece, the cities of Limassol, Paphos, and Larnaca marathons” in Cyprus and the “10K Kyriakidia” race in Filothei, that all hold their races every year in his memory.

To Theo Aristodimou and the ARISTO developers in Paphos, Cyprus, for their continuous support.

To Mr Andreas Hellinas, for donating in 1997 the SK bust in Filothei, next to the running track that bears his name.

To Michali Kimonos the Mayor of the village of Statos and Agios Fotios where SK was born, for doing so much.

To his friend George Gouveris and his wife Popi, for being true friends, in exceedingly difficult times.

To Mr. Nikos Hatzidimitriou, the head coach of the American College of Athens for his friendship and support, to start the revival of Greek Athletics after the war.

To Mr. George Kontos and Mr. Kotouzis, the first coaches of the “Filothei Athletic Club” that my father founded in 1956, for their support.

To Jim Davies and the NEW BALANCE company for donating the two beautiful sculptures that stand in the cities of Marathon, Greece and Hopkinton, Mass.

To Miko Kauffman that designed and created the Kyriakides sculpture that stands in the cities of Marathon and Hopkinton, that capture so much history.

To the cities of Paphos, Filothei and Pyrgos for placing the identical memorial plaques of SK in prominent locations. These three plaques are placed in the cities where he was born, where he lived and where he is buried, signifying the three milestones in a person’s life.

To the Cyprus Olympic Committee for honoring my father and for their great support.

To Meri Crouley who made such an important presentation in 2012, in her popular TV ecclesiastic program “NOW IS THE TIME”, including Martin Luther King and Stelios Kyriakides in the same program.

To the Mandela marathon organizers, that honored Stelios Kyriakides in front of the MANDELA family in 2015.

To Nick Tsiotos and Andy Dabilis that contacted me back in 1995 and wrote the first book about my father, “RUNNING WITH PHEIDIPPIDIS.”

To Suzan Gates, the agent of Nick and Andy, for the countless things she did, believing in the story of Kyriakides.

To my “brother” Tim Kilduff and the members of the 26.2 foundation, whom I first met in 2006, for his continuous worldwide support. We have done so much together.

To the ALPHA-OMEGA, the Greek American Association in Boston for their support.

To my wife Fay Ding-Kyriakides that has supported me and contributed so much since 2006, to our marathon work in China, and for publishing my father’s book in Chinese, but most importantly for spreading his legacy, in this vast and incredible country of 1.45 billion people of 56 nationalities and 252 languages.

To Michael Kalomiris my “God son”, lawyer and elite marathon runner, who ran in the Rio Olympics and has the same best time as my father, for accepting the heavy duty of protecting SK’s legacy all his life.

To the numerous running clubs in Greece and Cyprus that have honored my father. Most importantly, to the thousands of runners in Greece, Cyprus and around the world that remember him and continue spreading his legacy.

To my good friend Mimis Sofocleus, the Academic and Historian, from Cyprus, that helped me write, and for editing and publishing the Greek edition of this book.

To Susan, Emily, and Stelios Kyriakides, my first wife and our two Children for their support and help in writing this book.

To Sofia Grinezou for editing this book.

This book is also given as a gift, to the 26.2 Foundation, (www.26-2.org), for publication. Since 2006, the Foundation has done so much to promote the legacy of my father.

But especially I want to thank, my “brother in arms”, Tim Kilduff, President of the 26.2 Foundation, for his friendship and all the work he has done to promote the SPIRIT OF MARATHON and the legacy of my father.

And finally, to all these people that I might have forgotten to mention.

Dimitris Kyriakides



Boston 1946

Photo of Stelios Kyriakides crossing the finish line, stopping his stopwatch at 2h29'27" with George Demeter on the right, smiling, holding the Laurel Wreath that would be placed soon after on the winner's head. It is important to note the expression of concentration on Kyriakides face. The original photo was black and white.



The winner's official dinner.

3. PROLOGUE

I consider myself very lucky that Iphigenia and Stelios Kyriakides were my parents.

In exceedingly difficult times after the war, with many personal sacrifices, they brought us up, infusing us with morals and conscience and raising us to be good people.

Up to 1994, I viewed Stelios Kyriakides as my father. I knew that he was a great champion, having in his capacity two participations in the Olympics, a win in the Boston marathon in 1946 in a world's best time and European record, many international victories from 1933 to 1949, not to mention his involvement in the Greek Athletics Federation and his devotion to helping the Greek athletics and the local communities all his life.

I also knew that he was loved, admired, and respected by so many people, but I had no idea about the "details" of what he had done and how he had achieved those things. My father did not boast or brag about his life achievements. He was a very low-profile person, with both "feet on the ground" and had time for everyone that approached him. Because of my worldwide travels ever since I finished high school, I did not have the time to discuss with him important details about his life.

In late 1993, early 1994, I found some boxes full of memorabilia in the loft of the house. I did not understand the significance of the timing of my decision to clear the attic but now I know it was not an accident. 1993-94 was 7 years after my father's death. Number 7 had always had a strong presence throughout his life. He had won Boston choosing "bib" no 77, in a time of 2h29'27", on a Saturday, the 7th day of the week, 1946 was the 7th time that Boston marathon was moved back from the 19th to the 20th of April, he was the 35th individual winner of the marathon, ($5 \times 7 = 35$), and he died in 1987 at the age of 77!!

Later I also realized that my father and I had a very special connection. In the summer of 1987, my father was still in exceptionally good health. Then in mid-September he started feeling tired and sleepy, something very unusual for him. He had a general checkup, but they could not find anything serious, and so we decided that he would enter a hospital to have a full check-up.

My father was admitted at the "IGIA" private hospital on the 26th of October, which according to the Greek Orthodox Church is the "Saint Dimitrios" day, my "name day", and he died six weeks later, on the 10th of December, on my "birthday". These are the two most important days of the year, for any Greek Christian Orthodox. I later realized that my father had chosen these two days very carefully. After I found the material in the attic of our house, he started appearing in my sleep, at the beginning silently but later talking to me, advising, and guiding me.

As time passed, I would often feel his presence near me, most times with a no 7 appearing somewhere nearby. At first I was surprised, but later these phenomena became part of my life.

When I started going through the material that was in the boxes, I realized that I was holding in my hands a real treasure. But the material was very mixed up. For the past 25 years I have been working on this “find”, researching the information, and adding a lot of new material that I collect from other sources.

The scanned part of the archive is about 100GB, and until today, it does not include the six-inch-thick pack of newspapers from the 1930s, that are too big in size, too fragile and difficult to scan.

Once most of that archive was scanned, I started spreading the information through my friends and on the web, so what is now on the web and YOU TUBE all comes from this archive. I have contributed and helped to all the major documentaries found on the web, either with my presence or by providing material to the production teams.

Over the years and through the study of this archive and the worldwide research I have done, I managed to shed some more light on who my father really was.

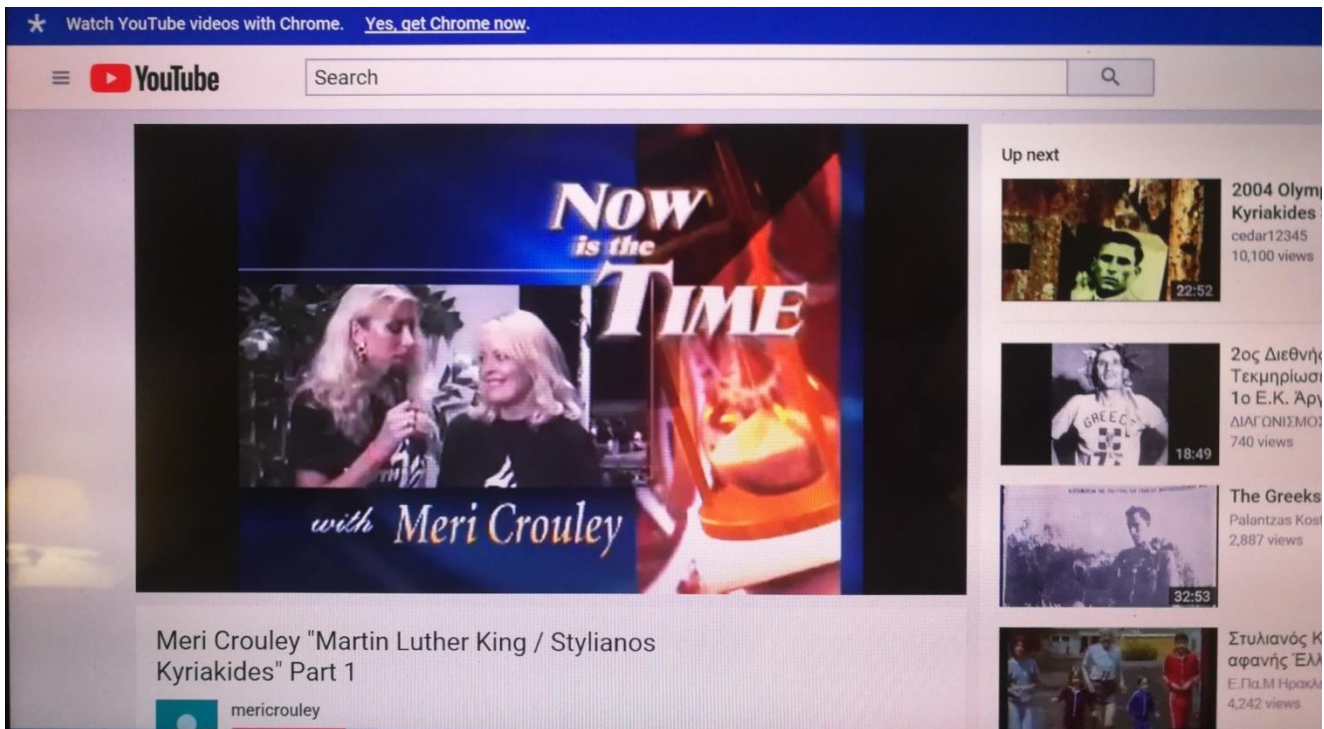
It is no wonder that the 26.2 foundation in Hopkinton, Mass. has described him as a MARATHON CHAMPION, PATRIOT and HUMANITARIAN.

In the official BOSTON marathon documentary by Jon Dunham, which aired in 2017, in the 20th minute it talks about Kyriakides’ race in 1946, where he is described as the “first runner in the world that ran for CHARITY”.

The RUNNERS WORLD magazine, one of the most prestigious magazines for long distance runners worldwide, published an article by Tom Derderian on the 18th of April 2020, selecting the 13 Most Important Boston Marathons noting that, *“The race from Hopkinton to Boston has seen it all, including many of the moments etched forever in marathon history. In 1946, Stylianos Kyriakides wins, becomes first charity runner. In 1946, humanitarian fundraising made its first appearance. Stylianos Kyriakides, an emaciated Greek runner, sought victory to publicize the post-World War II economic plight of his homeland, which had been devastated by Nazi Germany. He succeeded, returning to Athens with cash and 25,000 tons of American aid. He was greeted by more than one million jubilant Athenians. In recent decades, charity fundraising has become a big part of the Boston Marathon.”*

These two statements were an international acceptance of what I had been proclaiming about my father’s achievements for years and I received certain satisfaction that they were finally being highlighted and accepted on the web, by these two very important sources with so much international prestige.

In 2012, Stylianos Kyriakides was mentioned alongside Martin Luther King on Meri Crouley's religious TV program "NOW IS THE TIME", airing in the USA, where, in the same program, she talked about the life achievements and contributions to society of these two important figures.



Later, in 2015, I was invited to attend the MANDELA DAY MARATHON in South Africa, where the athletic, patriotic, and humanitarian achievements of Stelios Kyriakides, were given as an example of what an athlete can do in his life for the benefit of others, during the official marathon dinner in the presence of the Nelson Mandela family.



MANDELA DAY marathon 2015 official dinner, with the Mandela family

Stelios Kyriakides was not only the “[first charity runner](#)” in the world, but also the “[first runner to run for a cause](#)”. Again in 1947, he ran the Boston marathon to collect money and get athletic equipment, so that the Greek team can participate in the 1948 London Olympics.

Starting in 1934, he was also the “[first long-distance runner to start using a wrist stopwatch](#)” to check his pace, the “[first not to run on broken pace](#)”, the “first to plan his race carefully” by researching the course and his opponents before the race.

Beginning in 1935, he was “[the first to do careful warm up and cool down exercises](#)”, the “[first to do stretching exercises](#)”, the “[first to use careful daily diet and the first long distance runner- team player](#)” running with the aim to exhaust the opposition so that his team mates can finish in higher positions, thus gaining more points, so that the Greek National team can win the Balkan Team championship, in 1937, 1939 and 1940. In my constant search to find new material on my father’s life and work, I unveil details and meet new people whose stories about my father amaze me.

In the past 25 years I have come to know my father better, but often I long to be near him and ask him the thousands of questions that are going round in my head. Maybe one day we will meet again, and I will get that chance.

I have no doubt that Stelios Kyriakides was an exceptional and unique man. A man that never did anything without first considering how his actions would affect the people over a long period time. Dr. Mimis Sofokleous, a Cypriot Academic, Creator and Director of the Limassol Historical Archive and Museum and a good friend of mine who edited the Greek version of this book, told me one day, “*Stelios Kyriakides was not a man of the “moment”, Stelios Kyriakides was a man of “time”.*”

I strongly believe that Stelios Kyriakides might have passed away on the 10th of December 1987, but he is still near us in spirit, helping and guiding us, and people at any time can benefit and learn from his example.

I hope that the readers of this book will be inspired by the Athletic, Patriotic and Humanitarian work of Stelios Kyriakides.

His legacy is a lesson to us, to believe in ourselves and to live our lives with Ethos, Virtue, Faith, Justice and comradeship.

If this book inspires you, then you will become an official Stylianos Kyriakides “GOOD WILL AMBASSADOR”, for spreading his LEGACY.

Dimitri Kyriakides

CHAPTER I

TO UNDERSTAND THE BIRTH OF A LEGEND

People can only understand “Legends” if they are willing to reach them through deep study and imagination, as a poet would say. This is how one should approach the “legend” called Stylianos Kyriakides, “Stelios” to his friends, thirty-five years after his passing.

To understand Stelios Kyriakides as an athlete and as a person, we must first understand the times, and try to imagine the environment, the conditions in which he was born, where he grew up, when and how he started running and his life journey.

To put it briefly, Stelios was a poor young boy from the mountain village of Statos in the county of Paphos, Cyprus. At the age of 14 he was sent to the big city to earn a living and support his family. Certain circumstances led him to become at the age of twenty-two a runner for the “OLYMPIA” Athletic Club of Limassol, achieving international fame, impressive victories and great performances in Cyprus, Greece, the Balkans, Europe and the USA, not to mention his participation in two Olympic games, European games and his victory in the most famous marathon in the world, that of Boston, where he finished in a world best time for that year, setting a European record and shouting “**For Greece**” as he crossed the finish line. To understand the significance of this victory, it is worth mentioning that for Stelios, even the word GREECE was on his running vest, along with the famous bib no.77, Greece was not a mere “State”, Greece was a “state of mind”.

Kyriakides grew up in Cyprus, an island where a Greek population lived. An island that had been invaded and occupied many times because of its important geographical location. He grew up dreaming of Greece, picturing it in his young mind as the country of “the big, the beautiful and the true”, as it is mentioned in the Olympic anthem. At the time Cyprus had been under the British occupation since 1878, who had received it as a protectorate from the hands of the Turks, who had occupied it, until it was annexed in 1914. It is important to mention that in 1946 Stelios was running hungry and weak. Before the race, the BAA Doctor had refused to let him run, because he was told that he was too thin and too weak. Kyriakides only managed to run after he accepted to take full responsibility of his decision. As his friend Johnny Kelley said after the race, “Stelios was running for 7 million hungry people”.

Every time he ran, especially in the early days before he settled in Greece, these were the thoughts in his mind. He set his goals early, and there was no going back.

When he went to Greece in 1933, early in his running career, he was lucky to meet Otto Simitzek, the young Hungarian coach of the Greek National team. Otto was a graduate of the famous Royal Hungarian Training College and helped Stelios understand at an early stage how important it was to be disciplined in training, to do warm up and cooling down exercises before and after the races, to check his pace during running and to “listen to his body”.

He taught him to be careful in his personal life and how important it was to watch his diet. All these were novelties at the time, on a worldwide level.

Stelios listened to Otto carefully and followed his instructions to the letter. He could also see far, like Otto. As I mentioned before, as early as 1934, Stelios was the first long distance runner in the world to plan his race carefully, use a wrist stopwatch to check his pace, use stretching exercises for warm up and cooling down before and after the training and the race and to follow a special diet. The evidence of all these things is all in my archive. In fact, he was a long-distance runner 50 years ahead of his time.

Even though he was the youngest member of the Greek National “Dream team” of the 30s, he was the team leader when Greece travelled abroad. He was also the only member of the team that spoke English, something that came very handy when he went to London in 1935 and 1937, to the Berlin Olympics in 1936, to Boston in 1938, in 1946 and in 1947, and to the London Olympics in 1948.

In 1938 when, being in the leading group, he dropped out of the Boston race on mile 21 because of blood running from the blisters on his feet, he told Jerry Nason ,the Boston Globe sports reporter after the race , [“I will come back and win this race”](#). And he meant it.

He also proved later in his life that he could achieve the impossible, especially in difficult circumstances, when the country was almost destroyed during WWII from 1940 to 1944 and later during the Greek civil war, 1944 to 1949.

I remember in numerous occasions throughout my youth, during his incredible humanitarian activity, that many people used to tell him, “Stelios, this is impossible”. For Stelios Kyriakides “nothing was impossible” because he knew that all he had to do was find the solution. To him it was that simple. All the people around him were inspired by his persistence, his quick wit, and his very warm and humble personality.

To be a champion is not that difficult. What is difficult is to use your fame, your energy, your time, and your connections for the benefit of society, without ever asking “what is in it for me”.

In the past 25 years that I have spent working on my archive, I have met many people that shiver, get goose pimples or even have tears in their eyes when thinking and talking about him.

CHAPTER II

EARLY TIMES 1910 - 1932

The incredible life story of Stelios Kyriakides and the details surrounding the journey over the last six years preceding his triumph in the Boston Marathon on the 20th of April 1946 may be examined as evidence proving the strength of mind and character of this remarkable Greek.

Stelios was born on the 4th of May 1910, in the mountain village of Statos, in the province of Paphos of Cyprus. His father John, born in 1869 and his mother Eleni Iliia, were farmers.

The old village was located about 31 km from Ktima, presently the city of Paphos, in an altitude of about 3200 ft on the slope of the mountain, with views of Paphos and the East Mediterranean Sea.

There were about 30 houses in the village all made from stone, and the Kyriakides house was in the middle of the village. That house included 2 small rooms upstairs and the kitchen and the stables downstairs.

Today the village of Statos is abandoned after it was destroyed during numerous heavy rainfalls between 1964 and 1966 and in 1969 it was relocated 2km away, in a little higher altitude.

Stelios was the youngest of five children, four boys and one girl. He was born two months premature and very thin. His brothers were Chrysostomos, Dimitris, and Ilias and his sister was called Charithea. Chrysostomos and Dimitris moved to Greece around 1934-35 with the help of Stelios and settled as farmers in the city of Velika, in the South Peloponnese. They all raised big families, Charithea had ten children, Stelios had three children, Ilias had six and Chrysostomos and Dimitris a total of eight.

When he was five years old, while running in the fields, he fell and deeply cut his forehead. To stop the bleeding, he took some animal manure and put it on the wound. This wound left a permanent scar on his forehead.

As a young boy, he had to do the usual daily family chores of the times, including walking to Ktima or the nearby villages with his father and brothers to sell and buy goods, something very usual those days.

He attended the village's grammar school, six different age classes all in one classroom, and finished when he was fourteen. He liked playing and running around the village and enjoyed swimming after he moved to the seaside city of Limassol.

He helped his father with the animals, goats, chickens, and rabbits and took food to his brothers in the fields about 1-3 km away.

Mrs. Sophia, the fortuneteller in the old village, after looking at his hand when he was two years old, said to his mother that Stelios would do something big in his life.

In 1924 at the age of fourteen and after finishing the village school, his father sent him to Limassol to work and earn a living, to help the family. His first job was at his uncle's, Socrates Charalambous, bakery. This was an extremely hard and demanding job for a young boy. One must remember that those days, preparing and baking bread was all done by hand, standing up and staying awake for many hours.

At the end of 1926 he decided to leave and get a job as a dish washer in a restaurant. His dream was to be a waiter and serve the customers, but he was too young, and the owner wouldn't let him work in that post. The money was again little. He decided once more to leave that job and started working as a delivery boy in the well-known mini market of Mr. Kontopoulos. His job was to deliver the orders to the customers' houses by a special bike that had a big loading basket at the front. The day-long loading, unloading, and cycling to the houses took its toll and he developed aches and pains in his back.

The good thing about this job was that he had the opportunity to meet the British families and in 1929 he found work as a "house boy" for Dr. Cheverton, the District British Medical Officer. He worked as a house boy and as a gardener and had the opportunity to learn English.

In 1931 he suddenly started gaining height and he developed knee pains. Dr. Cheverton examined him and explained to him that the problem was the sudden gain of height. But he also told him that he had the potential to become a good long-distance runner because of his low heart rate. Dr. Cheverton was not only a doctor but also an amateur long-distance runner himself, who had run the Athens marathon in 1929.

In early 1931, under the encouragement of Dr. Cheverton, he started running for fun. He ran late at night, along the Limassol beach, wearing his work clothes, stopping every time he saw people, so that they would not make fun of him. He stayed with Dr. Cheverton from June 1929 until the end of 1931, when the doctor went back to England for further studying and training. Once Dr. Cheverton was back in England, he sent him two running shirts and a pair of running shoes and as Stelios said later in an interview, "that was the beginning".

At the end of 1931 he went to work at a hotel, in the holiday resort of Platres in the mountain of Troodos. In the spring of 1932, while working one day, he heard some girls, strong supporters of the club AEL, talking about an upcoming athletic event. He told them that his dream was to become an athlete and join the club ARIS and that he would win some races. The girls laughed at him, but that did not bother him. After this athletic event was over, Stelios carefully studied the results and based on them he started planning and training in the mountains.



The family house in the mountain village of Statos, with views of Paphos and the Mediterranean Sea. Living quarters were upstairs and the kitchen and stables downstairs





His father with his three brothers and his sister Charitheia



With his parents and his sister and three of her ten children

LIMASSOL.
 CYPRUS.
 19.9.31.

I have great pleasure in giving this testimonial to Stelios Kiriakides who has been my house-boy for two years.

He is a very reliable and willing worker, honest, punctilious and trustworthy. He is gifted with a thoughtful mind which is not deprived of a ~~sarcastic~~ sense of humour and I have no hesitation in recommending him as a tried servant both as a houseboy or as a Government Official.

W. H. Cheverton
 District Medical Officer.



The testimonial letter from Dr. Cheverton and Stelios working as a houseboy for the Greens family



Μια από τις σημαντικότερες μορφές του ελληνικού και διεθνούς αθλητισμού ήταν ο Στέλιος Κυριακίδης. Στην πρώτη του εμφάνιση σε Παγκύπριους Αγώνες κέρδισε τους δρόμους 5 και 10 χλμ. Στη φωτογραφία, αριστερά, με τη φανέλα του χωριού του (Στατός) μαζί με τον συναθλητή του Λοίζο Παπακριστοφόρου.



Young Stelios on the left and his friend Loizos, representing their village Statos in the Pan Paphian Games in 1933 and on the right him practicing how to start.

CHAPTER III

LIMASSOL, ATHENS, BALKANS, LONDON, BERLIN AND BOSTON

1933 - 1940

Having to work hard as a child, and later having to work in some difficult jobs to survive and support himself, Stelios missed the opportunities that the other more privileged young people living in the bigger cities had.

He discovered running late. The first time he ran, he was around twenty-one years old, and for the next year he trained alone without a proper coach. At the end of 1932, he returned to Limassol from Troodos and found a job as a house boy for the family of Mr. Green, who was the local Judge. The Greens gave him permission to train, and he started running near the coast, late at night again, so that people wouldn't see him. Many of his friends tried to discourage him saying, "How can you be an athlete since nobody in your village was an athlete before?"

Late one night, with the Limassol "Olympia" Athletic Club stadium closed, he climbed over the fence and started running around the track, throwing stones inside a hat he had left at the start, to count how many rounds he had run. The night watchman saw him running and went to him, asking what he was doing. When Stelios explained, the watchman asked him how many rounds of the track he had completed. When Kyriakides counted the stones, they were thirty or 12K. The night watchman was impressed and told him to come by the next day to see the coach Mr. Pavlos Agelinidis, but Stelios could not go, because he had no free time.

In February 1933, the Pan Cyprian games were announced. Kyriakides read the news in the newspaper PROINI, and he finally decided to go to the "Olympia" Athletic Club for the first time. Stelios asked permission from the Greens to go during daytime to meet the coach. In the stadium the coach talked with Stelios and asked him to do some running alone. Stelios ran a few laps, but his style needed improvement.

The other runners present made fun of him. Stelios was not discouraged because he knew that he had stamina and a strong will to succeed. The coach asked him to run a few laps with two other long-distance runners present and Stelios outran them easily. The coach was impressed, and he immediately signed him as a member of the "Olympia" Club. The Club was the oldest and most famous Athletic club in Cyprus, founded in 1892. Stelios would remain a member of the club all his life.

On the 9th of April, the Club organized an internal selection running event to choose the team for the upcoming Pan Cypriot games. Stelios did not run because he had hurt his leg chopping firewood in the Green's garden. He had already been selected to run for the club, so it was not important.

Between the 20th and 23rd of April 1933, Stelios took part for the first time in his life in an official track and field event, where the best athletes of Cyprus were competing. On the second day he won the 5K in 17'28" and the third day the 10K in 37'26". He immediately became the new sensation for long distance running in Cyprus.

The Cyprus Federation decided to send him to Greece to compete in the Pan Hellenic games, the Greek national games that were also the qualification for the upcoming Balkan Games taking place in October in Athens.

The Balkan games had started in 1929 and were track and field events between six Balkan countries, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey Albania, and Greece. But Yugoslavia was a Socialist Federal Republic at the time, consisting of 8 countries, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Montenegro, with a total population of 16 million people in 1935 while Greece only had about 6 million. So, these games were in fact an event with thirteen competing countries. It should be clarified that not only athletes competed as individuals, but also the countries were competing for the Team points.

On the 23rd of September, in his first big race outside Cyprus, Stelios won the Marathon in the Pan Hellenic games in 3h05'00" breaking the Greek and Cypriot national records and between the 1st and 5th of October he came second in the marathon in the Balkan games also held in Athens, in 3h03'05" breaking again the Greek and Cypriot records. Stelios broke the Greek National marathon record a total of six times, with best being the 2h29'27" in Boston and held the national marathon record for a total of 34 and a half years until April 1968. This is the longest time in the modern long-distance running world, according to the GUINNESS BOOK of marathon. In the Balkan games Greece came first as a team with 167 points, Yugoslavia second with 158, followed Romania with 62, Turkey with 34, Bulgaria with 32 and Albania with 7.

Stelios at the age of 23, a former "nobody" in the running world of both Cyprus and Greece, suddenly becomes the new long-distance running sensation. During his stay in Greece in 1933, he met and became close friends with the new coach of the Greek National Team, the famous Hungarian Otto Simitzek. Stelios was one year younger than Otto but they both spoke English, so the communication was good.

After the Balkan games Stelios went back to Cyprus, to prepare his travel documents and during that time, he started training by correspondence with his new coach. Stelios surely became the first runner in the world to do so. The letters coming from Greece included advice and specific programs that Stelios had to follow. The athlete fully complied with his coach's training programs, sending back the results by post.

At that time, Stelios with his open mind started searching life, looking far ahead, always wanting to discover and learn new things. This experience helped him to evolve as a runner and as a person in the coming years. Stelios spent the whole winter of 1933 training, but he often visited his parents in the village. In his discussions with Simitzek, Kyriakides realized that to run successfully one must be able to control his rhythm. He trained carefully on that so that he could implement it during the actual races too. He realized that he needed a wrist stopwatch to accomplish that.

His Hungarian coach had talked to him about the existence of stop watches worn on the wrist of the runner. In the winter of 1934, Stelios found and bought one from an English runner who was serving in the Army and was stationed in Cyprus.

Kyriakides became the first long distance runner in the world to use a wrist stop-watch. In my research on the topic, I found that not until the early 80s did runners start wearing such a watch on their wrist (instead of just an ordinary watch) during a race. Probably one of the first runners to do so in the early 80s was the famous American Marathoner, Bill Rogers, a four-times winner of the Boston marathon. Bill confirmed this to me in one of the times we met.

1934 was a special year. On the 11th of March 1934 Stelios took part in the Pan-Paphian Games, a local event in Cyprus, with a team that he had assembled from his village, Statos. In three days, he won four different races, a goal that only a few long-distance runners have managed to accomplish in running history. Kyriakides achieved this a total of seven times in his career! The first day he won the 800m in 2'11" and later the same day the 400m in 59.8", while the second day he won the 1500m in 4'52" and the final day the 5000m in 17'30".

That year, Simitzek visited Cyprus for one month to train the best athletes of the country and watch the 1934 Pan Cyprian games. That brought them closer together. The training by correspondence with Simitzek lasted all his carrier, every time Stelios returned for some periods to Cyprus, in 1933-1934, in 1935-1936 and finally in 1945 - 1946, when he went back to Cyprus to prepare and train for the 1946 Boston Marathon. At the same time and after long discussions with Simitzek, he started learning other important things about long distance running.

In the Pan Cyprian games on the 8th of April, Stelios repeated the amazing achievement by winning in three days four more demanding races, the 1500m in 4'21", the 5000m in 16'20", the 10000m in 34'47" and the 20000m in 1h11'9.4".

Otto Simitzek was very impressed with his friend's performance and invited him to come to Athens to run in the Pan-Hellenic Championship. Kyriakides accepted, so they travelled back to Athens together. In Athens he ran and won the 5K and 10K in 16'12" and 34'35" respectively.

He was already in a remarkably close friendship with Simitzek. Whenever the Greek "amateur" coaches tried to put Simitzek down in the Greek Federation, he stood up for him. The Greek coaches, very inferior to the Hungarian, envied him and tried to sabotage him. Stelios Kyriakides supported his coach in all the interviews that he was giving to the newspapers.

Later in 1934 in the Balkan Games of Zagreb, Yugoslavia, Stelios Kyriakides achieved his first international victories in 10K and in the marathon race, where he beat the famous Romanian runner Gal, one of the ten best runners in Europe at that time.

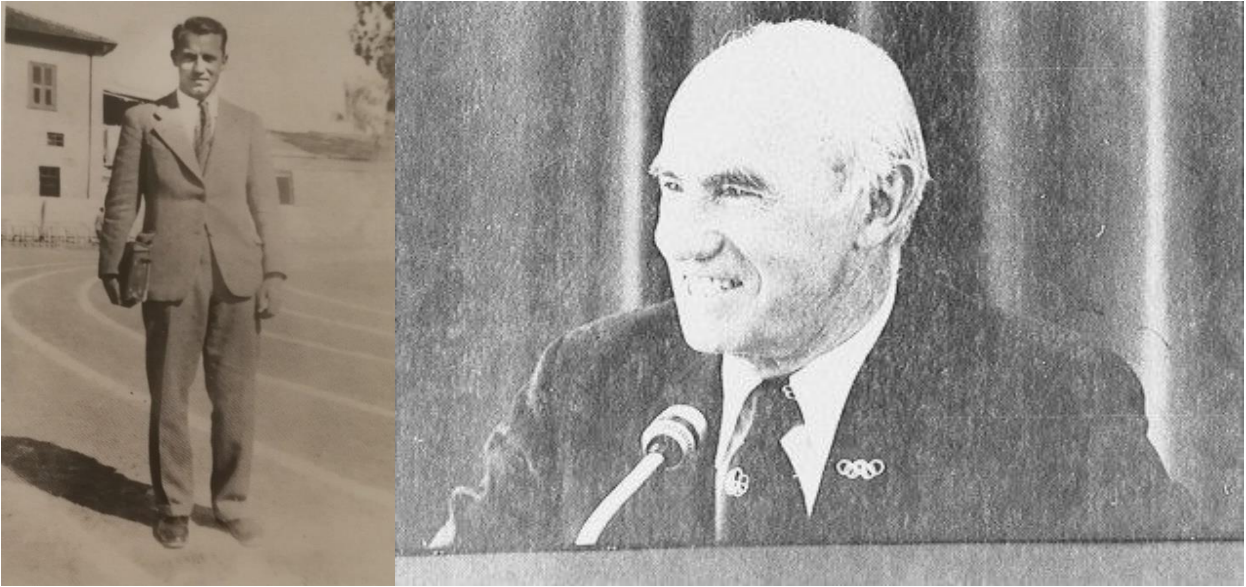
This was the response of Stelios Kyriakides in his first race outside Greece. The very first day, on the 26th of August, in the 10K, in collaboration with Arvanitis, the second-best Greek athlete, running as a team, exhausted the great runner Manea from Rumania and Broutson from Yugoslavia and finished first and second. Stelios Kyriakides won in 33'49.2" setting a new Balkan record.

The next day Stelios and Simitzek borrowed a car from the Greek Embassy, and they carefully checked the marathon route inch by inch. Stelios ran in some specific parts of the course checking his time. Simitzek told him not to get carried away at the start, but instead to start slow and increase his pace after the second half of the race when his competitors would be tired and exhausted.

The Marathon was set to take place on the 2nd of September. The race started and as Simitzek had predicted, the two Yugoslav runners starting with a fast pace. Kyriakides stayed back following the instructions of his coach. This advice was something that he would never forget. In all his later races, including the 1946, in Boston, this was the strategy he followed.



On the right young Stelios kneeling and his first coach Mr. Agelinidis, in the Limassol Olympia Athletic club stadium in 1932.



His coach, friend, and mentor Otto Simitzek, in 1934 in Cyprus and in 1987 in Athens. Otto later was the Dean of the International Olympic Academy for 32 years.



Balkan games 1934 in Zagreb and in 1939 in Athens.



Balkan games in Bucharest in 1937 and in Athens in 1936. Notice Stelios' stopwatch.



In the middle of the race, he was 500 meters behind the two Yugoslavs and the Romanian runner, Gal. On the 23rd kilometer he caught up with them. The plan Simitzek had suggested was to pass the 30 kilometers in a time of 2 hours, which is an average of 4 minutes per kilometer. He did exactly that. He had stamina and he continued with the same pace for the next few kilometers. Although the weather temperature was low, almost at 5 degrees Celsius, he won in 2h49'31" which was a Balkan record, followed by Gal in second place.

The whole national team cheered for him, lifted him up in the air at the finish line and Stelios Kyriakides cried with joy. The 12 points he earned for his team with his victories in 10K, and the Marathon helped the Greek national team win the points event with 164 points and Greece remained Balkan Champions, with Yugoslavia coming second with 158 points. The Yugoslavs did not like that, so they started a diplomatic war claiming that Kyriakides and Frangoudis- another Cypriot- winner of the 100 meters race, were not Greeks but Cypriots and should be eliminated, but their claim failed.

Returning from Zagreb, outside the train station of Athens, thousands of fans were waiting to welcome the team. They lifted them up on their shoulders and paraded them in the streets. After the arrival celebrations were over and before doing anything else, Stelios Kyriakides and Simitzek visited Spyridon Louis, the marathon winner of the first Olympic games of 1896, at his house in Marousi. The old legendary Olympic marathon winner embraced him and with tears in his eyes he said to the young athlete "Stelio I wish you all the best...always. The Greeks are born to run".

The municipality of Athens gave Stelios a temporary job with 30\$ per month, 5\$ of which he sent to his parents in Cyprus. The money was not enough for food and proper accommodation, so he had to live in the changing rooms of Panathenaic Stadium, using the changing rooms' bathrooms and eating poorly. Otto Simitzek lived in the next room, also in poor condition.

Almost one month later, Simitzek invited to Greece the Hungarian national team, one of the best in Europe, for a Greek-Hungarian meeting. The event that drew everyone's attention was the 30K race because the European champion, Kalambus, was competing for Hungary. On the 8th of October, in an unforgettable duel, Kyriakides beat the great runner with a time of 1h56'35", leaving Kalambus in second place with Chris Vartzakis finishing in the third place, not far behind. Chris Vartzakis would run marathons until the age of 92.

Stelios asked the municipality of Athens for a permanent job with a higher salary so that he could live in better conditions. Unfortunately, he was given empty promises and the athlete, disappointed, returned to Cyprus. The municipality of Limassol hired him as an office assistant on the 1st of January 1935. He stayed in Cyprus until February 1936. The Mayor of Limassol told him that whenever he had to attend a race in Greece, he could do so!

At that time, travelling to Greece was a two-days sailing trip by steamboat, which also stopped in Alexandria, Egypt.

Simitzek again corresponded with him by mail, sending the training programs for the races that he would participate in 1935. Some of those letters are in the archive. On the 25th of March of 1935, the anniversary of the Greek national holiday in Athens, he won the race of 20K in 1h10'22" setting a Greek national record. During the Pan Cyprian Games between the 2nd and 5th of May, he won the 10K in a time of 35'25", in the second day the 5K in 16'02" setting a new Cypriot record, in the third day he finished second place in 1500m in 4'17.8" and in the fourth day he "crushed" his own record in 20K achieving the time of 1h08'06"

On the 26th of May in the Balkan Games that took place in Athens, the Yugoslavs objected once more, against Kyriakides' participation in the Games, claiming this time that he was English, on the account that Cyprus was part of the British Empire at the time. Unfortunately, the Greek Federation gave in to these demands not wanting to cause an international incident and Stelios could not compete for the Greek team that year, but he was allowed to run the marathon, starting two minutes behind the other runners. The Romanian athlete Gal finished first in 3h07'40" but Kyriakides finished in second place in 3h08'07", only 27" behind the winner, meaning that he had caught up by almost 1.5 minutes, or about 500m. In the newspaper "Athletic Daily" the journalist Athanasios Sembos writes that "[on his left wrist \[Kyriakides\] wears a stopwatch and he checks his pace and time](#)". That was the first time that the runners diverted from the main route and went around the Marathon Tumulus to pay their respects to the fallen Athenians in the battle of Marathon in 490BC. This custom continues to this day. Greece won again the team event with 158 points while the Yugoslavs gained 130 and Romania came third with 80 points.

In June, Stelios came back to Athens and won all the three races he participated in, breaking the national records in the 5K and the 10K with times of 15'45" and 32'52.4" and won the marathon with a time of 3h06'30". The Cyprus Federation arranged for Stelios to go to England for the English championship, AAA "Amateur Athletic Association". On the 15th of July he arrived in England and participated in the marathon race. There were athletes from 10 countries competing in these games which were the biggest in Europe. In the marathon Stelios came second out of 39 runners in 3h03'29" just 23 seconds behind the famous British marathon runner Norris. Only 5 runners finished the race that day, as all the others dropped out suffering from dehydration because of the high humidity. The English Federation immediately asked him to run with the British colors in the upcoming Olympic Games in Berlin in August 1936, since he was a Cypriot. They gave him a good offer and lots of privileges and he considered the possibility to accept, but eventually he turned it down. Stelios could not even imagine himself participating in the Olympic Games for Britain and not for GREECE.

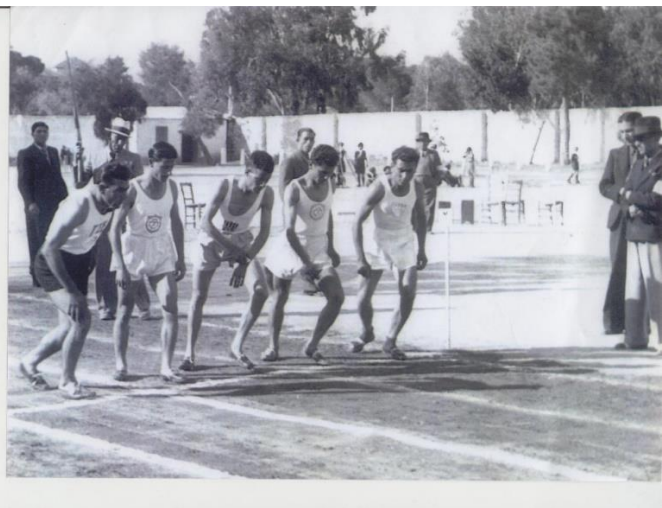
While in London he bought a Kodak camera, a very advanced possession for an ordinary person to have at the time, which allowed him to take snapshots during his travels and daily life. There are plenty of those in the archive.

He also sent to the makers his wrist stopwatch for overhauling. There are two letters in the archive between him and the manufacturer, proving that he repaired the wrist stopwatch in London. He also bought two English books about training techniques and diet for athletes.

In the 30s healthy living was a fashion in the USA and UK. In his collection I found the book "HEALTHY LIVING" by Dr. Ilias Petrou, who had studied in the USA.

Kyriakides followed the 10 basic rules suggested by the Doctor throughout his life. The Doctor was asking people at that time to avoid tinned food and medicine, to lead a healthy life and spend four weeks a year eating only grapes.

Interestingly, Dr. Petrou was killed in 1939, point blank, in the streets of Athens. At that time the pharmaceutical companies were beginning to flourish. His doctrine was followed by the Greek army for many years. Dr. Petrou wrote about 20 books.



The stopwatch Stelios got in 1934 and on the right he is seen starting the stopwatch at a 5K race in Cyprus the same year.

EXERCISES FOR
ATHLETES

STELIOS J. KYRIAKIDES

1935

F. A. M. WEBSTER
AND
J. A. HEYS, L.S.M.

ATHLETIC TRAINING
FOR
MEN AND BOYS

STELIOS J. KYRIAKIDES

1935

F. A. M. WEBSTER
AND
J. A. HEYS, L.S.M.

ΤΟ ΒΙΒΛΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΥΓΕΙΑΣ

ΦΥΣΙΚΗ
ΥΓΙΕΙΝΗ

ΥΠΟ
ΝΑΙΑ ΠΕΤΡΟΥ, D. P., O. D., Ph. D.

Stelios J. Kyriakides
Apr. 27

ΑΘΗΝΑΙ

1935



It is interesting to note here that the Greek athletic journalists wrote at the time that all marathon runners ate their meals at the local restaurants of the city of Marathon the day before the race. You see, at the time the runners were poor people and they tried to benefit from the fact that the Federation offered free meals the day before the race. They also wrote that Kyriakides was the only one eating his own pre-cooked food, full of carbohydrates, fruits, and honey, which is in fact exactly the diet recommended by modern-day specialists around the world.

On the 1st and 2nd of September 1935, in a race in Amianto, in the Troodos Mountain, Stelios won the one mile and 5K races, achieving a new Cypriot record in the 5K with a time of 15'31.5". Later, the 20th of September he competed in the qualifying races for the Balkan Games in Athens, where he won the 10K in 32'28", setting yet another Greek record.

In November of 1935 he won the one-hour race, covering 17430m, a Greek national record, as well as the marathon race in the National Games in 3h06'03".

1936 was an Olympic Games year. In accordance with his coach, he decided not to run in many events but to prepare himself for a better result.

In early June 1936 he ran and won the National Championship finishing the 5K in 15'45", the 10K in 32'52.04" and the marathon in 3h06'30".

He was included in the Greek Olympics team competing in Berlin. Spyridon Louis, the winner of the first Olympic marathon in 1896 was the flag bearer of the team. Louis gave Hitler an olive branch with the message that ["there must be peace in the world"](#).

Stelios Kyriakides participated in the marathon race on the 9th of August. The marathon course started in the Olympic Stadium. After going around the stadium, the starting field left the stadium through the Marathon Gate. The route followed the racetrack and the Nordschleife and then returned to the Olympic stadium. The athletes came through the Marathon Gate back to the stadium and then ran for 150 meters to the finish line, under very harsh conditions on a hot day with very high humidity. 14 out of the 56 participants dropped out.

The winner was the Korean Sohn Kee-chung in 2h29'19", second came the Briton Ernie Harper and third another Korean Nam Sung-yong. Kyriakides finished 11th in 2h43'20", which was a new National record for Greece.

In the same race the American champion Johnny Kelley, two times winner in Boston Marathon at that time, participated and finished in the 18th place.

The other two Americans, Tarzan Brown and Billy McMalun did not finish.

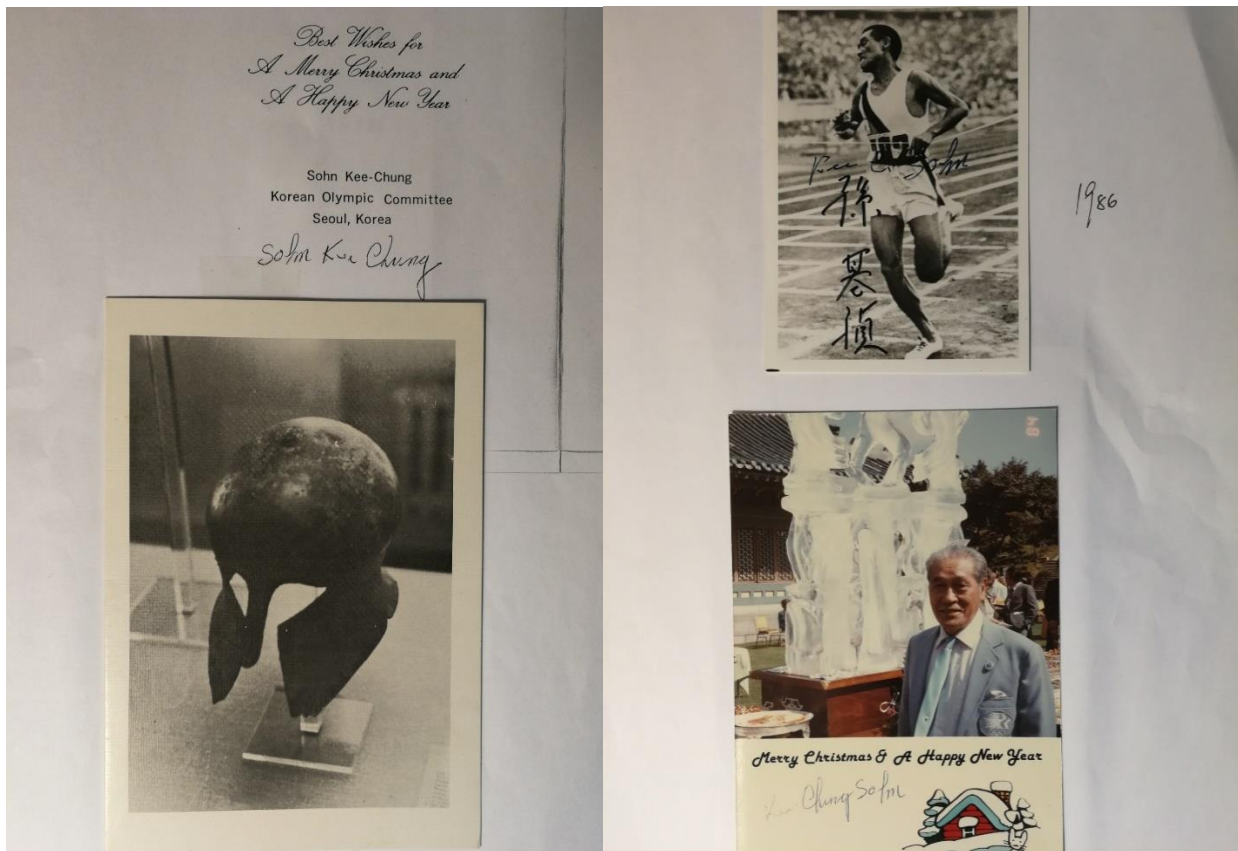
Kyriakides became friends with Johnny Kelley who invited him to compete in Boston.

During the time of the Olympics, Korea was a colony of Japan, so Korean sportsmen competed as members of Japanese team and were using their Japanese names. The Japanese names of Sohn Kee-chung and Nam Sung-yong were Son Kitei and Nam Shōryū respectively.

During the medal ceremony both runners bowed their heads during the Japanese anthem and later remarked that they were ashamed to compete for Japan, an occupying power, rather than for an independent Korea.

During the Games Kyriakides, who spoke the English language fluently, was the leader of the team. The Greek newspaper KATHIMERINI had offered a bronze helmet of an ancient Greek soldier to be given to the winner in the Marathon. Stelios Kyriakides handed it over to the organizers of the Olympics, but during the prize-winning ceremony the helmet was not given to the winner, probably being “buried” in a basement of the German Athletic Federation.

Two decades later, during a meeting at the Olympic Academy in Greece, Stelios Kyriakides mentioned this to the President of the German Olympic Committee, who promised to investigate. Some weeks later the bronze helmet was found in a perfect condition, almost untouched, and in a special ceremony in Berlin it was given to the 1936 marathon winner. Stelios Kyriakides was also invited. Sohn Kee-chung and Stelios became friends for life. Sohn gave the helmet to the Olympic Museum of Seoul, and he used to send Christmas cards to Kyriakides every year.



Stelios returned to Greece after the Olympics with the same flame in his heart. On the 20th of September he won a 10K race in 32'28" while in October, in the qualifying race for the Balkan games of 1936, he ran and won first place in the 5K in 15'52.2" and in the 10K in 32'07.4", achieving three new National records in the 5K and the 10K.

Some days later, in the Balkan games in Athens he won the marathon race beating the Romanian Gal, setting a new Balkan games record of 2h49'10" while in the third place finished Stelios friend, Thanasis Ragazos, a great upcoming runner. Ragazos later finished 6th and 3rd in the Boston marathon in 1947 and 1951.

On the 4th of May 1937, Stelios won in the Greek National games, running the 5K in 15'35" setting a new Greek national record, and the 10K with 32'52". Later, during the Balkan Games in Bucharest between the 5th and the 12th of September, Stelios finished first in the marathon race in 2h57'22" and second in the 10K race. Greece also won the Team Points event with 120 points, while Romania came second with 104.

In July 1937, Stelios went back to London to take part in the AAA championship for the second time. He ran the marathon and finished second again, with a time of 2h40'20", setting another Greek and Cypriot record. The winner of that event was Donald Robertson with a time of 2h37'00"

In 1937 he met Fanouria Maina from the island of Santorini, coming from a family of carpenters and furniture makers.

They fell in love, got engaged on the 27th of November 1937 and later got married on the 26th of December 1939. Stelios Kyriakides had already enlisted in the Greek army as a volunteer and joined the infantry on the 3rd of November 1939.

Fanouria died in April 1940 from tetanus due to an unfortunate accident, being three months pregnant. Stelios Kyriakides was devastated.

BOSTON 1938

In 1936 Kyriakides met Johnny Kelley for the first time in the Berlin Olympics and Kelley invited him to compete in the Boston marathon.



Johnny Kelly in 1945

In the beginning of 1938, Stelios was in a good condition, so he decided to accept Johnny Kelley's invitation to run in Boston, he got in touch with the BAA and the Greek American community of New York. He started preparing, training in the hills of Pendeli and Pikermi. He strongly believed that he could do well.

He travelled for three days by train from Athens to England and then boarded the ocean liner SS "BREMEN" that sailed from Southampton to New York. In order not to miss his training schedule while travelling, he ran around the ship's decks to maintain his form. He became the star of the ship.

Finally, after about 13 days of travel he arrived in NY on the 4th of April 1938 where he received a warm welcome by the Greek American community. Among the welcoming party were the champions Nikos Giannopoulos, Frank Vasilopoulos, Theodoros Matsoukis and the President of the Athenian club. Stelios visited the office of the "Atlantis" newspaper and after a few days he traveled to Boston where he met for the first time the Demeter brothers, George, and Harry, both judges in Boston and owners of the hotel MINERVA where he would be staying. The next day he went to the offices of the Boston Globe to meet Paul "Jerry" Nason, the famous sports reporter of fifty years, who also gave "Heartbreak Hill" its name.

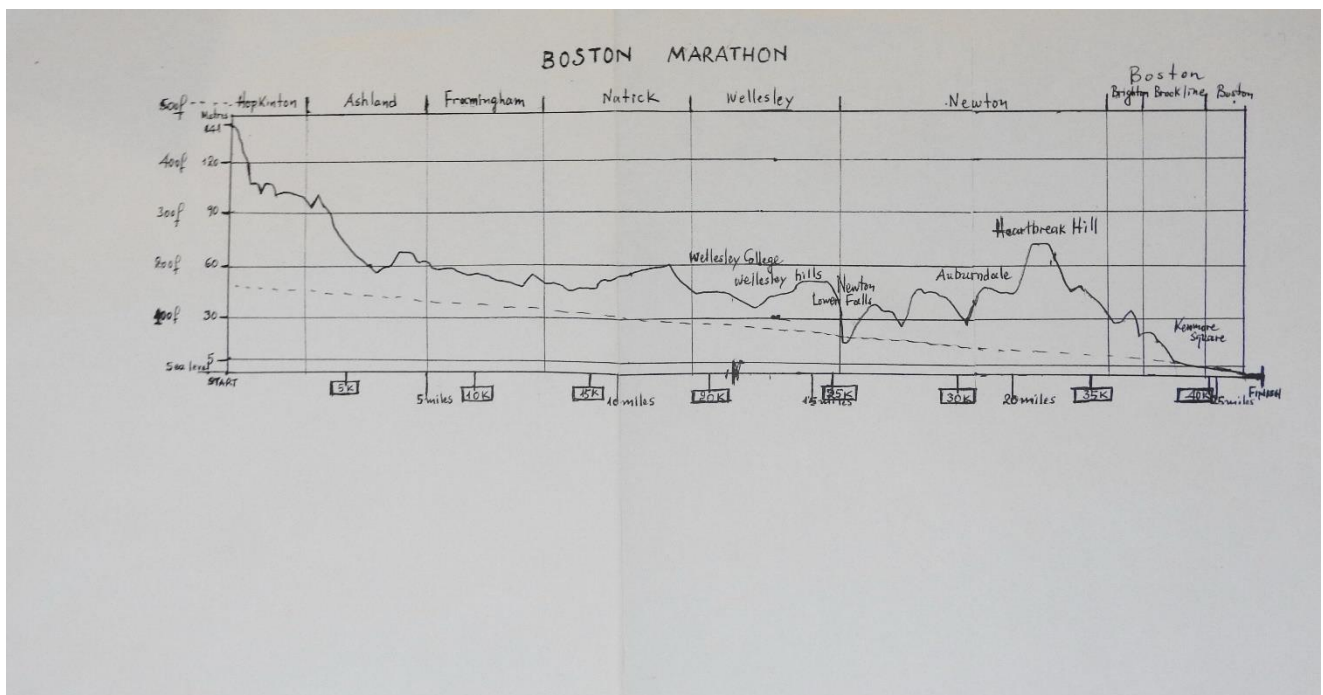
The Demeters gave him a guided tour of the spiritual capital of the USA, and they showed him the marathon course. Stelios Kyriakides began to "check" very carefully the route two weeks before the race. In fact, there is an 8mm color film that an unknown Greek shot at the time showing Stelios training on the course.

Jerry Nason wrote in the Globe a few days later: "Kyriakides has trained so impressively over the local course. Since coming to this country 10 days ago he has worked out daily, learning the ups and downs of the Hopkinton to Boston route, which he now knows by heart. He has walked the entire distance and has also run the 26 miles 365 yards as part of his training."

This was something very unusual for a marathon runner to do at the time. But Kyriakides had done the same in 1934 in the Balkan marathon in Zagreb with his coach Simitzek using the car of the Greek Ambassador. All this is also mentioned in the newspapers of the time.

Searching through my archive, I recently came across a piece of paper with a hand-drawn sketch showing the elevations and downhill of the entire Boston course, with intermediate distances marked in both miles and kilometers. I also found that Stelios had asked Demeter to prepare this for him. It is worth mentioning here that all the marathons of the time were organized by the Federations only for the national championships, since no private individuals organized marathons, as they do today. A map of the course was drawn for all these marathons, but none was showing the elevations of the course as they do today.

Not even in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, probably the best organized marathon of the time, or Boston marathon that was called the AMERICAN MARATHON did not have such map at that time.



1938 - This chart of the Boston course was made for Kyriakides, look at the miles and kilometer marks.

Kyriakides was the first marathon runner to walk and run almost all the marathon courses he participated in and tried to learn the routes and the elevations of the courses, so he could plan his race. He also studied the opposition carefully, showing again how far ahead of his time he was regarding his running techniques.

Stelios was surprised to find out that the surface of almost the entire Boston route was made of cement, something unusual for Europe at the time. Cement is a hard surface for the feet of a marathon runner and Stelios found out later, to his dismay that many runners dropped out of the race every year, suffering from blisters on the soles of their feet.

The race was set to be on the 19th of April 1938, on Patriots Day. Stelios Kyriakides felt optimistic, having prepared well although he had missed some workouts while he was travelling. He was well-rested, he knew the course was difficult, but he was told that the spectators were very “warm” all the way through the course and that the weather conditions would be ideal.

He believed that he could do well and that he had good chances of being in the top five and, why not, to even win the race, following the example of Pan Trivoulidis, the Boston marathon winner in 1920. Trivoulidis was a Greek immigrant who came to the US in 1916 and competed under the colors of NYC.

But unfortunately, the weather forecast for the day of the race was wrong. The weather was hot with a lot of humidity.

The Greek people of Boston welcomed Stelios two days before the race and gave him a new pair of leather, state-of-the-art shoes as a present to use in his upcoming race. He was told that the shoes were so “soft” inside that he could even use them without socks. Kyriakides believed them. He accepted the present from the Greek-American people of Boston because the US was so advanced in sports equipment. This was something that he regretted for the rest of his life. This served as an example for all runners never to wear a new pair of shoes in a marathon or any other long-distance race without “breaking” them first, always wearing socks, even if the shoes looked “special and nice”.

Stelios applied his usual methodical plan for the race. He did not get carried away by the early fast pace of the runners. He started to approach the leaders almost halfway. He joined the leading group of 5 athletes and felt strong. But near the 16th mile (25th kilometer) of the race, both his feet started to get blisters. Stelios managed to stay with the leading group up to the 21st mile (34th kilometer), passing Heartbreak Hill, the hardest uphill part of the Boston marathon route, while struggling with this painful situation. Due to the unbearable pain, he was forced to drop out of the race. The winner was Leslie Pawson in 2h35’34.8”, while the rest top 5 runners finished in under 2h40’00”.

At that time, the BAA organizers did not have vehicles to pick up the runners that dropped out. So, Kyriakides had to get a free ride on a bus, and then a free taxi ride that dropped him off near the finish line. There he met his Greek- American friends who could not believe what had happened. Mike Doukakis, a kid at that time, remembers how disappointed he was, as he describes in his biography. Stelios was really upset with this unexpected failure, especially because he felt that he had disappointed the Greek Americans, who believed in him and had offered him the best they could. When Stelios later met Jerry Nason of the Boston Globe, he told him, **“I will come back to win this marathon”**. This promise to come back and win became his goal in the following years, after he went back to Greece, at least until the war started. The idea revived again in his mind at the end of the occupation in 1945, and eight years and one day after that day in 1938, on the 20th of April 1946, at the end of this career it became a reality.



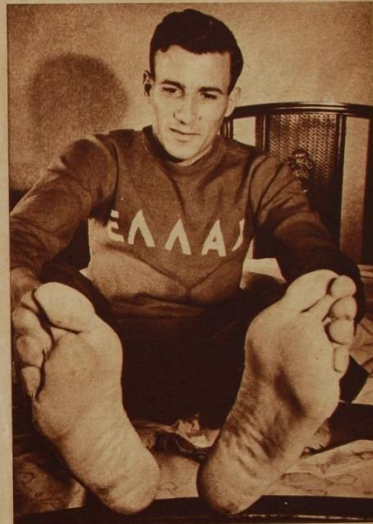
Boston 1938. On the left Stelios training, looking at his stopwatch and on the right, running, wearing bib no 1 and the new “unbroken” shoes without socks.

ASK HIM IF HE HAS A WORD FOR IT



AP Photo
Introducing Stylianos Kyriakides, from Greece, where the marathon got its start. You might think he was training to be a first baseman with all that stretching, but he merely is giving the old Greek demonstration of how to limber up marathoning legs. He will try it out again next Tuesday when he joins the field in the Hopkinton to Boston B. A. A. grind.

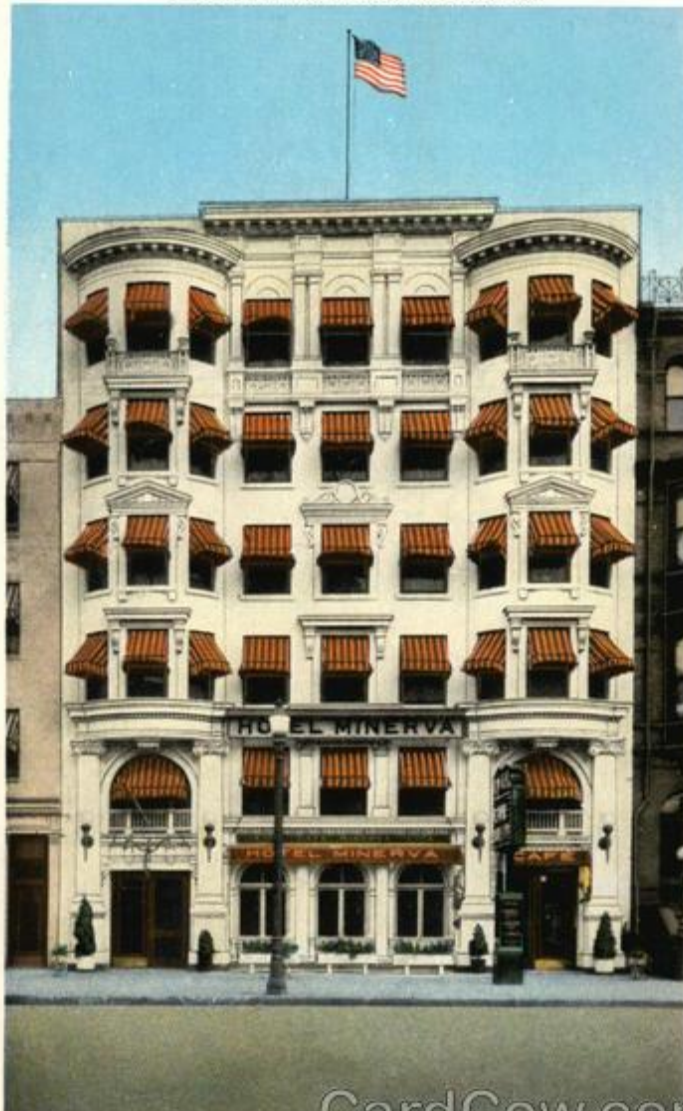
BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE FOR APRIL 17, 1938



THE GREEKS HAD A WORD FOR 'EM AND IT WAS "DOGS."

The camera played Stylianos Kyriakides, 28-year-old Greek Marathon champion, something of a dirty trick in overplaying his feet, but Stylianos is proud of them and says they're going to carry him to victory in the B. A. A. Marathon come Patriot's Day. They've already made him one of Europe's foremost road racers. He was 11th in Berlin Olympics, seven places ahead of our Johnny Kelley, and hasn't come 5000 miles just to run for exercise. That Greek alphabet on his chest spells out "Hellas" which means Greece. (Globe Staff)

OPPOSITE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH



HOTEL MINERVA, BOSTON, MASS.

H. C. DEMETER

CardCow.com



Hotel MINERVA on 214 Huntington Av, and the spacious restaurant

In the Greek national games in June 1938, Stelios won the 5K and the 10K in 15'46.5" and 32'56.5". Later that year, having recovered from the disappointment of Boston, he realized that he had missed a lot of important training for the Balkan games. With the help of his friend and coach Otto Simitzek, they prepared a plan. The plan was that Stelios would run in such a way as to exhaust the two Yugoslav runners in the marathon so that they would not be able to finish in the first six places. That was the only way that the Greek national team could win the team points and become Balkan Champions again. Doing all the hard work, by increasing and slowing down the pace, he finished second with 3h02'20" and helped his friend Thanassis Ragazos win the first place, with both Yugoslavs out of the first 6 places. A couple of days later, being very tired, he finished third in the 10K race with 33'45.4". According to modern practices, a marathon runner does not run another race for two or three months, let alone another competitive race within two days. The Greek national team became the Balkan Team Champions once again, with 125 points, while the Yugoslavs came second with 114 points.

The following year in 1939, he took part in the Pan-Cyprian games that were held from the 12th to the 15th of April, in Limassol. He won in all four races that he entered. The first day he won the 10K in 32'45.1" a Cyprus national record, the second day he won the 1500m in 4'19.9", the third day the 5K in 15'57.1" setting a Cypriot record, and the fourth day he won the 20K in 1h11'15". Quite a feat for any long-distance runner.

Later that year, during the Greek National Games he finished second in the 10K race in 33'59". Over 70,000 people flooded the stadium and they all cheered and applauded him for his achievements. This was usual practice at the time. People came in masses to support the Greek "Dream Team".

On the 8th of December 1939, in his last great performance in the marathon in Athens during the Balkan games, he ran almost alone the whole race and finished first in 2h52'07" and third in the 10k in 33'50.8". That year there was no team point count, but Greece came first winning seven events, compared to Yugoslav and Turkey, who each won six.

In 1940 during the last Balkan Games before WWII in Constantinople, Turkey, Kyriakides finished third in 2h46'43" in a very "close" race until the last kilometer, following Thanassis Ragaos who won the race in 1h44'37".

On the 4th of April of that year his wife Fanouria had died from tetanus, being three months pregnant. Devastated from that incident, he agreed to take part in the games to help the Greek team win the Balkan Team Championship again.



The two AAA English Marathon Championships silver medals (1935 and 1937).



1936 Berlin Olympics. Olympic memorabilia: the medal, the official pin and the ID card and on the right the start of the marathon.

CHAPTER IV

THE GERMAN OCCUPATION 1940-1945 AND THE CIVIL WAR 1945-1949

In October 1940, the Italians, Allies of the Nazis, tried to invade Greece. WWII had already started in earnest. The Greek Army resisted the Italians for 6 months preventing them from reaching south through Greece. In April 1941, the German army took over and the Greek resistance collapsed. Later Winston Churchill in his memoirs mentioned that this was one of the reasons why Germany lost the war. The six-month resistance by the Greeks delayed the Germans enough to arrive at the Russian front in June 1941 but a harsh early winter worsened the situation for the Germans and the Russians managed to destroy a big part of the powerful German army.

The years after 1941 were dark times. Stelios was working for the Electricity Company of Athens and Piraeus, earning a salary that allowed him to survive. During that time of total darkness and fear, he felt that he was getting old and that he should have a family. A young lady with sparkling eyes, Iphigenia Katsarelou, captured his attention while he was delivering the electricity bills to her house in the suburb of Filothei. Her family had emigrated from Smyrna, Turkey 25 years ago and her father was working at the National Bank of Greece.

He asked their neighbor, Elsa Bakatselou, to speak to her parents. Her parents already knew who he was, and they agreed for the two to meet. They both were fond of each other and decided to marry as soon as possible. They did so on the 28th of December 1941. Soon after they moved in a farmhouse nearby and decided to start a family. Eleni, their oldest child, was born on the 4th of December 1942 and two years later they had Dimitris on the 10th of December 1944. Mary, the youngest daughter, was born in August 1948.

As soon as the German occupation started, Stelios and his close friend Gregory Lambrakis, member of the national team and later national political hero, formed a resistance group they called "Greek Athletes Union". This was a clever cover name since they would have an adequate excuse for meeting as athletic champion comrades in case they got caught.

The members of this group assisted the Resistance by passing messages and helping the people, since Gregory was also a doctor. Stelios helped in his own way, by passing messages between the resistance groups. It was easy for him to pass messages through the German army blocks since his work as an electric bill collector allowed him to move freely from area to area. The Germans never suspected him.

On a Saturday in January 1943, Stelios was out on a walk with his wife and baby Eleni when they were stopped mid-day by a German patrol. The German officers told Ifigenia to take the child and return home and then they took Stelios to the German station in the nearby suburb of Chalandri. The Germans had arrested a total of fifty people to hang as retaliation because the previous day the local resistance had attacked a German patrol and killed two German soldiers.

The people arrested had given their names and ID cards and were being questioned. When asked to do the same, Kyriakides gave the ID card from the Berlin Olympics that he always carried with him. The German officer was surprised and asked which event Stelios had competed in. The German soldier was even more surprised to hear that Stelios had run the marathon because he was also a long-distance runner. The officer released Stelios but the other 49 imprisoned were hanged the next day in Penteli Avenue, in public view.

The officer asked Stelios to visit his house to see the athlete's trophies and medals, so the next day some German officers visited his house. Among the athlete's trophies was also the official album of the 1936 Olympic Games that was given as a souvenir to all athletes participating in the Games. On its first page there was a photo of Hitler and his autograph. After the Germans saw that, they saluted "Heil Hitler" and left. The officer ordered that the German patrols would not enter Stelios' house. That was the perfect opportunity for Stelios to turn the establishment into a safe house, offering a hideout to stranded pilots of the allied forces that had parachuted when their airplanes were shot down. The pilots hid in the basement of the farmhouse for one or two days before the Resistance took them to Egypt by a submarine. Stelios would also spread the BBC English news to the people using a short-wave band radio that he had bought in Boston in 1938.

The only news one could hear in Greece at the time was German propaganda. This experience deeply affected Stelios, who started thinking how he could help his country and its people. At the back of his mind, he had hope that those times would pass and that he would relive moments like his victories in Zagreb in 1934 and in Athens in '36, '37 and '39.

He also hoped that his family and friends from the "dream team of the 30s" would all survive. It was at that time that he started thinking about the Boston marathon. He envisioned that if he ran again in Boston and managed to finish in the first six places, he could raise awareness among the Americans about the desperate situation Greece was facing and ask for help.

The darkness of the German occupation ended in October 1944 but immediately after, The Greek Civil War broke out, between the Greek Government army and the Democratic Army of Greece (the military branch of the Greek Communist Party) and proved to be even more bloody and destructive. I was born in these conditions, on the 10th of December 1944. Stelios returned to the safety of his house every night and looking at his newborn child and his wife crying, he kept asking himself, "Why? Why is this happening?"



Kyriakides joined the army as a volunteer in December 1938.
On the right, Germans hanging people in public view during the occupation.



Stelios and Iphigenia getting married in December 1941. They had Eleni on 4
December 1942, Dimitri on 10 December 1944 and Maria in August 1948.

THE GREEK CIVIL WAR from September 1944 to September 1949

To really appreciate the patriotic work of Stelios Kyriakides, one must examine the conditions under which he accomplished it in the years 1946 and 1947, those dark, difficult and much painful years of modern Greek history. To understand the immensity of his feat, the reader must first look into the Greek reality between the late 1944, marking the end of WWII and the start of the Greek civil war and September 1949 when the Civil war finally ended.

The Ohio State and Miami Universities explain this very well in their website ORIGINS.

“The years 1940–1949 were ones of continuous horror for the Greek people.

When the Second World War (WWII) ended in 1945 and the rest of Europe was beginning to rebuild itself, Greece entered into a second war, more vicious than that fought against the Axis powers. If eight percent of the population of seven million had died or been killed during WWII, the Greek civil war brought that figure up to ten percent.

After the First World War, Greece did not enjoy political stability, enduring repeated coups d'état and dozens of governments. Although Greek communists had been a serious threat to all Greece's frequently changing governments, the struggle between monarchists and republicans was also bitter.

Despite pro-German sympathies the Greek government remained neutral at the outset of World War II. When the country was invaded by Italy, Greece became an Allied nation in 1940. Although the Italian invasion was repulsed, by May 1941 when German troops swept through the Balkans, Greece was also occupied and partitioned among Italian, German, and Bulgarian forces. The occupation was brutal: the people were crushed and the land and whatever grew or was built on it decimated.

The period of Greek civil strife is commonly divided into three “rounds”. The first one began in 1943, long before WWII was over. At that point, the communist-supported Greek resistance movement that fought the occupation—the National Liberation Front (EAM)—and its guerilla units—the National People's Liberation Army (ELAS)—found themselves fighting at times against their rival in the resistance, the National Republican Greek League (EDES).

In May 1944 the communists appeared to be gaining the upper hand in most of the country. In areas under their control, they launched a terror campaign against their opponents. When liberation came in October 1944, Greece was in a state of crisis, which soon led to the outbreak of another round of violence.

By early December of that year, round two, the December events erupted. The regular Greek National Army (GNA), assisted by British units, crushed the ELAS forces. The conflict appeared to have been settled by the Varkiza Agreement, February 1945. The

communists accepted defeat and agreed to disband, and the government consented to general amnesty of EAM/ELAS members.

Neither side fully abided by the agreement: a government-backed terror campaign was launched against the EAM/ELAS members and supporters, and the left did not fully comply with its obligation to surrender all weapons. The remnants of EAM went underground and the ELAS fighters retreated to the mountains to conduct guerilla warfare.

In December 1946, they renamed themselves the Greek Democratic Army (DSE) and were completely controlled by the Greek Communist Party (KKE). The DSE was assisted by the new communist regimes of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. The third round, the civil war proper, was only a matter of time.

This change in tactics proved a fatal mistake. Manpower shortage prevented the DSE from conducting a successful conventional warfare. Its guerilla style—hit-and-run attacks—had been much more effective. The GNA, (heavily supplied by American instructors, weapons, and materiel from the Truman Administration) now proved its superiority in manpower, weapons, and particularly air-force. Indeed, in March 1946, ELAS guerillas attacked a police station in the village of Litochoro, killing its occupants, an event that signaled the beginning of the third round. A series of successful attacks and wide grassroots support encouraged the KKE's leadership, in September 1947, to change its strategy from that of guerilla to full scale conventional military warfare.

Several other mistakes also proved critically detrimental to the communists' efforts and eventually doomed it to failure.

Greek public opinion tilted against the communists because of the evacuation, or abduction, of close to 28,000 Greek children to safe heavens in the Balkan countries or, according to government sources, to training centers that were meant to turn the children into a communist avant-garde military force, to enforce communism around the globe. In addition, the growing share of Slavic Macedonians within the DSE caused many Greek citizens to fear that they harbored separatist interests that would lead to the disintegration of Greece.

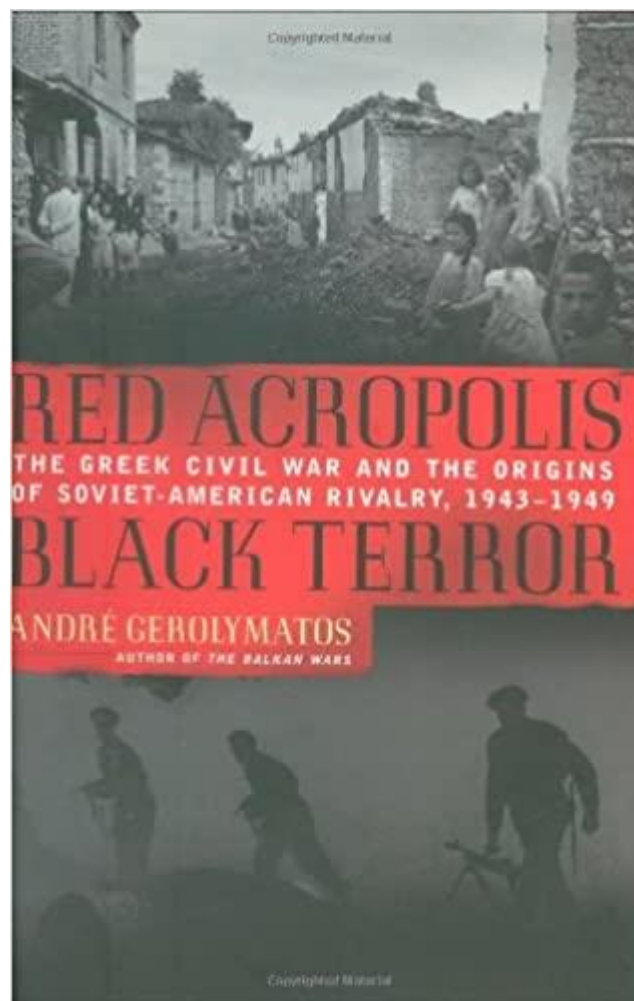
The GCW was not only a bitter internal struggle between two ideologically irreconcilable Greek camps—derogatively labeled “monarcho-fascists” and “bandits”—each envisaging and proposing diametrically opposed programs for the rehabilitation and future of their war-devastated country. The GCW was also an endgame among the Allies to tie up the loose ends of their spoils-of-war agreements.

The civil war was further complicated by the fact that while the communists may have enjoyed considerable grassroots support in Greece itself, their putative ally, the Soviet Union, had other fish to fry. In an agreement (unknown to the Greek left) Moscow had agreed with Great Britain not to support communism in Greece, apparently in exchange for the Soviets having the upper hand in the rest of Eastern Europe. Deprived

of their own great power backing, Greek communists were hardly a match for their British and American-backed opponents. The civil war that ended in September 1949, left Greece in a greater economic crisis than the country suffered because of the German occupation.

Of a population not much greater than seven million, well over 100,000- possibly close to 150,000- perished in the civil war. One million became homeless and 28,000 children “disappeared” (to become ardent communist fighters or taken abroad for their own safety).

A deep political polarization prevailed in Greece, resulting in the imprisonment and execution of tens of thousands.”



CHAPTER V

BOSTON 1946

Sometime in February 1945, Stelios was standing in front of the Marble Stadium where the first modern Olympic Games took place in 1896 and where he had run so many times. There, a stranger approached him and asked him: “You are Stelios Kyriakides, aren’t you?” “Yes, I am”, he answered. “Do whatever you can my dear Stelios. Only you can help us. Do something for our country...we are dying, can’t you see?”

These words shocked him, and it was the last straw. He returned home running, his feet hurt, his lungs were burning as he hadn’t run in years. He entered the house, hugged his wife Iphigenia and the children and said, “Iphigenia I have decided to start again...I will start training and hopefully next year I will run in Boston. I will try to win and bring help and unite all the Greek people like brothers again. You’ll see my dear, you’ll see!”

Iphigenia loved her husband and supported him, but she could not fully understand his motives. How could this skinny man, who had not run in five years, start running again, let alone run competitively, go to America, and come back a winner? All that was unthinkable to her, it was beyond any expectation, nothing but a dream, and she tried to discourage him.

A few days later, Simitzek came to the house. Iphigenia overheard them talking about training plans, special workouts, distances, and times.

In early 1945 Stelios started running again. One month later, he convinced his wife that the whole family must go back to Cyprus, where the conditions were much better, so that he could dedicate his whole time in training.

The love and devotion that Iphigenia felt for her husband were solid. Carrying two suitcases, the whole family went back to Cyprus in March with the first steam ship that sailed after the end of the war from Piraeus to Cyprus via Alexandria, Egypt. When we arrived, we had to quarantine for 10 days in Larnaca, because of the smallpox pandemic, but Stelios would run every day along the Larnaca beach.

After the quarantine was over, the family went to Limassol and found a small two-room house in the old part of the city, not far from the sea front and the Olympia Athletic Club track, where Stelios continued his training. This house is still there, all locked up. The Olympia Club immediately asked him to take part in the Pan Cyprian games that were scheduled from the 10th to 13th of May and Stelios agreed. In the games he won the 5K and the 10K in 16’46” and 34’58.2”, not bad times given the circumstances. Stelios spent the rest of 1945 training hard in Limassol, following the training program that his coach, Simitzek, sent him by correspondence, for the third time in his career. He trained the flats near the Limassol beach and the uphill and downhill in the mountains of Troodos. He managed to gain some strength but not weight.

Being 5’9”, his weight was 100 to 105 pounds, so despite the efforts of his wife and

friends, Kyriakides did not gain an ounce.

One day in late October he wrote a letter to his friend George Demeter about his decision to run in Boston the next year. For the seventh time in its fifty-year history, the Boston marathon was going to be held on the 20th of April instead of the 19th, which would be “Good Saturday” or “Holy Saturday” in the Greek Orthodox Church. Some days later Demeter replied to him: “Stelio, we are very happy that you are coming ...we are waiting for you.”

In the beginning of 1946, Kyriakides returned with his family to Greece to prepare for his trip. He also wanted to train in Athens and the Penteli mountain where the hills are longer and more difficult than the Boston route. One day when he was training in the hills near his house. He had left his track suit under a pine tree before he started running but soon after he fainted from the lack of food and exhaustion. When he came back to his senses, he returned but did not find his clothes. It seemed that somebody had taken them. When he reached his house, he explained what had happened to his wife and she started crying.

In late February 1946 he went to the Greek Athletic Federation along with Simitzek to ask for financial support for his trip to Boston. Unfortunately, the Federation had no money, not even for his one-way ticket that was 575\$. The whole country was bankrupt. Kyriakides was disappointed but he would not give up. He decided to sell some of the house furniture. The next day he met his English boss, the GM Mr. Kemp and the Greek VGM Mr. Lazaridis of the Electricity Company to ask for help. They happily gave him a check of the equivalent of 1000\$, which was barely enough to travel to and from Boston and stay there for fifteen days. With his 200\$, he had a total of 1200\$.

He then went to the US Embassy to apply for his visa, but they refused to even see him. No visas were being issued at that time. Mr. Kemp came again to his assistance and Stelios, on his next visit to the Embassy, was welcomed as a VIP by the US Ambassador who issued his visa immediately.

When he went to the Bank to exchange currency, the Bank refused to do so, due to the exchange policy restrictions. Feeling desperate once again, he yelled at the bank manager: “I have been running for Greece since 1933, I fought for the Greek flag...Let me go run and I will bring back more than enough money”. Finally, after reaching to the higher authorities and Mr. Kemp, the bank agreed to make the currency exchange. Stelios then went straight to the TWA office and bought his one-way ticket on the first flight from Greece to the US on a Lockheed four engine super constellation. It would be a three-day air travel from Athens to NY through Rome, with overnight stays in Paris and Shannon, Ireland. He returned home and smiled to Iphigenia, Eleni and his son Dimitris for the first time after a long time. On the 4th of April 1946 he started his long trip to Boston, a trip that would make history in the long-distance running community, and not only.

On the day of his departure, he went with Iphigenia to the airline offices in the center of Athens, where his friend and coach Otto Simitzek was waiting in the empty of people Amalias avenue. He greeted him and wished him good luck. They were all emotionally charged but Kyriakides made a promise to them: “[When I return, you’ll be waiting for me here, along with thousands of other Greek people](#)”. This scene is described by Otto in detail in the 2004 NBC documentary “[Stylios Kyriakides: The Journey of a Warrior](#)”.

On the 6th of April he was welcomed in NY by his Greek friends back from 1938 and immediately left for Boston by train. Not only had he no time to waste, but also he had to try to gain some weight to better his chances for a successful race. George Demeter welcomed him and offered accommodation at his hotel, MINERVA. Stelios only had a few days to train, gain weight and rest before the race.

In April 1946, the athletic world highly anticipated the staging of the first significant athletic event since the end of WWII. Of course, the Boston marathon took place even during the war, but only with a small number of participants. 1946 would be the first time that the same top runners from the US and Canada would be there to participate. But even so, despite the efforts of great sports reporters, such as Jerry Nason of the “Boston Globe”, a friend of Stelios Kyriakides since 1938, and Arthur Singel of the “Boston Traveler”, the interest was low among the population in that period. This was however expected, the people’s primary concern was how to survive in the unbelievably bad conditions all over Europe and the Pacific, not to mention the thousands of young Americans who had come back suffering from the trauma of the war. These Americans were the people who fought alongside the allies against the Axis forces of Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, and militaristic Japan.

This was the second time that Stelios Kyriakides would run in Boston. His tragic story of the previous 6 years was also the story of Greece that had suffered so greatly during the resistance against the Italians and the war against the Germans in the mainland in 1940-41, followed by the invasion and the occupation by the German troops, the enormous amount of deaths and the destruction of the country, was the subject of all athletic and news reports as the American journalists wanted to hear more and raise awareness among the public. It was Stelios Kyriakides himself who, without realizing it, represented all the aspects of the Greek drama, which was also his personal drama. His story triggered a unique interest among the public, about the life of the Greek people, creating a feeling of solidarity towards him and his mission to help his destroyed and tortured country.

On Monday the 8th of April, late at night, he visited his friend Jerry Nason, who was the most specialized sports journalist, covering the Boston marathon for many years. Jerry later said that he was surprised by the enormous physical changes that his friend had endured since he last saw him in 1938. Most of all, Jerry was concerned about Stelios’ physical condition. He was shocked to see that his friend was skinny, malnourished over the previous years and that made him wonder if he could even finish the race. Stelios was also exhausted from his long journey of 5000 miles by plane and 280 miles by train in three days from Athens to NY and then to Boston.

During their meeting Stelios told him many stories of his experiences during the German occupation, which still applied to many Greeks because of the ongoing civil war. Stelios begged him to write about all these misfortunes and inform the American people. Jerry was deeply moved by the humility of his friend, who was again helped and supported by the Greek American community of Boston, especially the Demeter family, George, Spyros and Pan who owned the MINERVA hotel and the chef Jimmy Contanis who took care of his diet.

Stelios told his friend that he had to sell some of his possessions to survive and later to collect the money to travel to the US. He talked to him about the situation in Greece, where 7 million Greeks did not have food, clothing, medicine or even houses to sleep in and people died in the street every day. Hundreds of villages and cities had been completely devastated. There were no roads, no bridges, no railroads, no harbors or transport after the so-called Greek Holocaust and the disastrous advent of the Nazis.

Jerry Nason asked him if he felt strong enough to run. Stelios bravely answered with tears in his eyes: [“If I don’t have the strength in my feet, I definitely have the strength in my heart and soul”](#). After that meeting the two men became closer friends and Jerry Nason wrote the first historic article about that marathon race. The article was published the next day: [“The Greek runner hopes for more than the first place in the marathon race, he hopes for help for his country”](#).

In the article he also mentioned that Stelios had dropped out in the 1938 race because of the blisters in his feet, about the friendly relationship with George Demeter and did not miss to write about his age, saying, [“he is of course now 36 years old and very thin. The Germans came and now they are gone, Greece was destroyed, and Kyriakides, an Electricity bill collector, had to sell whatever he owned, his clothes, his boots, his furniture, all except his running trophies, to save his wife and his children from starvation and death. He is a marathon runner with “a mission” and the gift he hopes to bring back with him when he returns in Greece, is the generosity of a wealthy nation, to a poor and starving nation”](#).

After the publication of this article, many sports journalists started writing about the race of the 20th of April daily. Their interest in the race increased, after the excellent performance of Kyriakides on the 13th of April, when he came fifth in the 10-mile Cathedral handicap race in 51’40”. Kyriakides was happy because his goal was to finish in around 54 minutes. Although the Boston marathon was already a great athletic event, the dramatic appeal Stelios made, gave another meaning and dimension to that year’s race, one that would stay in the Boston marathon history as the first time a runner ran for Charity.

The journalist Arthur Siegel, of “Boston Traveler” wrote the nextday: [“Greek humanitarian aid runs in this year’s marathon. If Stelios Kyriakides finally wins or even if he manages to finish, this means food and clothing supply for Greece. The average runner that will race on Saturday will be thinking about himself and his personal pride. But Stelios Kyriakides runs with a whole nation that depends on him. He was here once again in 1938 to participate, but this time he is here like a savior of his country”](#).

All these articles touched the hearts of many Americans and increased the public's interest in the story. On Thursday the 18th of April two days before the race, President Truman made an announcement in front of 300 newspaper representatives, describing the conclusions of his committee, after they had toured Europe, verifying exactly what Kyriakides had already told them. The US team that had visited Europe had witnessed the adverse conditions of the food crisis and reached the sad conclusion that the lack of food was crucial because there was no organized response to it. He talked about the need to carefully and immediately plan the reconstruction of Europe, what would later, in 1947, become known as the "Marshall plan". Truman said, "America cannot remain healthy and happy in the same world where millions of human beings are starving. A sound world order can never be built upon a foundation of human misery. We would all be better off, spiritually, and physically if we ate less. One day a week let us reduce our food consumption to that of an average person in the hungry lands. We cannot doubt that at this moment many people in the famine-stricken homes of Europe and Asia are dying of hunger". The appeal that Truman's speech had in the US, was catalytic for all Americans and was up to this point, the most dramatic presentation of the situation Europe. After all, many US citizens had emigrated from Europe, where their relatives were still there.

The morning of the 20th of April 1946, the day of the Boston marathon, Truman's speech was on every front page of the morning newspapers: "Truman asks from us, to starve for support" wrote the Boston Herald. The same day the broadcasting agency United Press International, transmitted the news all over the world as follows: "The United States of America after the announcements of President Truman, decided to cover almost the half nutrition needs internationally, appealing for two days of hunger weekly, for every American family. At the same time, they decided to send a big amount of wheat and cereals to Europe, covering their needs until the middle of the summer". Truman added: "The talking has to stop. Now it is time for action. Bread is a symbol of life. For the first time in human history, it becomes a symbol of life for all the nations". This was the reality of those days in the USA. This was the atmosphere, on that exact day of the great Boston Marathon, on the 20th of April 1946. Stelios Kyriakides, with his interview to Jerry Nason and his radio interview to Gus Sanders in the radio station WNAC, had made an impact not only on the Greek American community in Boston but also on all Americans, giving his race the character of a crusade. He had inspired a feeling of solidarity to a whole nation. He was looked at as the savior of his country and at the same time the public wanted him to win, even though many of the participants came from their own communities, like Johnny Kelly, the winner of the 1935 and 1945 events, Tarzan Braun, the winner in 1936 and 1939 and others.

Stelios and George Demeter left from the Hotel Minerva at around 10 o'clock to reach the marathon start in Hopkinton. Stelios was sitting in the back seat next to George Demeter. Demeter was holding the winners' laurel wreath, a symbol of eternal glory in the ancient Greek games that Demeter had been giving to the marathon winner since 1931. Stelios was lost in his thoughts. The last time he had competed in the Boston in 1938, he was 28 and very fit. Now he was 36 and malnourished. But he remained focused and on his mind was the letter he had received the previous day from his wife Iphigenia:

“I wake up and have your image in front of my eyes. I pray to God to help you finish in a good place and fulfill your dream about Greece. On the day of the race, the children and I will go to the church to pray for your safe return to Greece. I send you all my love and greetings from the children. Iphigenia”.

The car arrived in Hopkinton after one hour and everything was being set, in anticipation of the start of the race at 13:00. That was the first time that the runners would get dressed at the Hopkinton Town Hall. Doctors Thomas Kelley, Nicholas King and M.A. Cohen were examining the runners to check if they were fit to compete. While examining Stelios, they took their time. They finally announced that Stelios could not compete, as he was too thin and too weak. Stelios was shocked and tried to reason with the doctors. Thankfully, George Demeter, who was a lawyer, intervened, saying that “this runner came from Greece 5000 miles away, he has a letter from his Federation, and he takes full responsibility for his action”. That was the only way they would let Stelios compete.



Pre-race Doctors' checkup



Wishing his friend good luck before the race.

The organizers offered Stelios bib no 1, in honor of being a Greek and a guest from abroad, same like they had done in 1938, but Stelios asked to run with bib number "77". When the reporters asked why, he explained that number 7 was a lucky number in ancient Greece, so with double 7 he could have "double" luck.

A few days before the race Demeter had contacted Johnny Kelley, asking him for some advice about what shoes and socks Stelios should wear, to avoid a repetition of the 1938 incident. In those years many athletes running the Boston marathon, dropped out because of blisters caused by the hard cement surface of the road.

When Stelios met Johnny before the start, after the initial pleasantries, Johnny asked his friend, "Stanley, did you take my advice about the shoes and socks?" Johnny Kelley always called Stelios "Stanley".

Last minute before the start, George Demeter gave Stelios a piece of paper and told him: “Stelios take this piece of paper and read the front before the start of the race and read the back after you finish”.

Stelios' jersey had the words Greece and the sign of the Greek Athletic Federation with the Greek national flag and the figure of the ancient Greek goddess of Victory, NIKE - literally meaning VICTORY- printed on it.

The race started at 13.00 with 116 runners. The race route took the runners through Ashland, Natick and Wellesley, famous for the cheering girls of the local college who followed the runners for a little bit almost in the middle of the race. Then they had to run the uphill's of Newton, the hardest part of the race, with the Heartbreak Hill being the most difficult one and then after making a circular turn in Cleveland Circle, they would pass from the Kenmore Square, turn at Hereford Street, and turn left at Boylston Street, almost one mile before the finishing line in front of the Lenox Hotel. Stelios was the only runner wearing a wrist stopwatch on his left wrist, the one he had bought in Cyprus in 1934. Stelios started slowly as planned, letting the others go fast in the downhill part of the first 10 miles. At Wellesley Kyriakides slightly increased his pace and reached Kelley in the sixth place. Approaching the hills on mile sixteen Kelley accelerated and moved into the second place. Kyriakides held back. Heading up Brae Burn hill, Johnny took the lead from Lou Gregory. On mile 23, Stelios caught up with Kelley and the duel started. Kyriakides was keeping a steady pace with Kelley increasing and decreasing his pace, running on a “broken pace”.

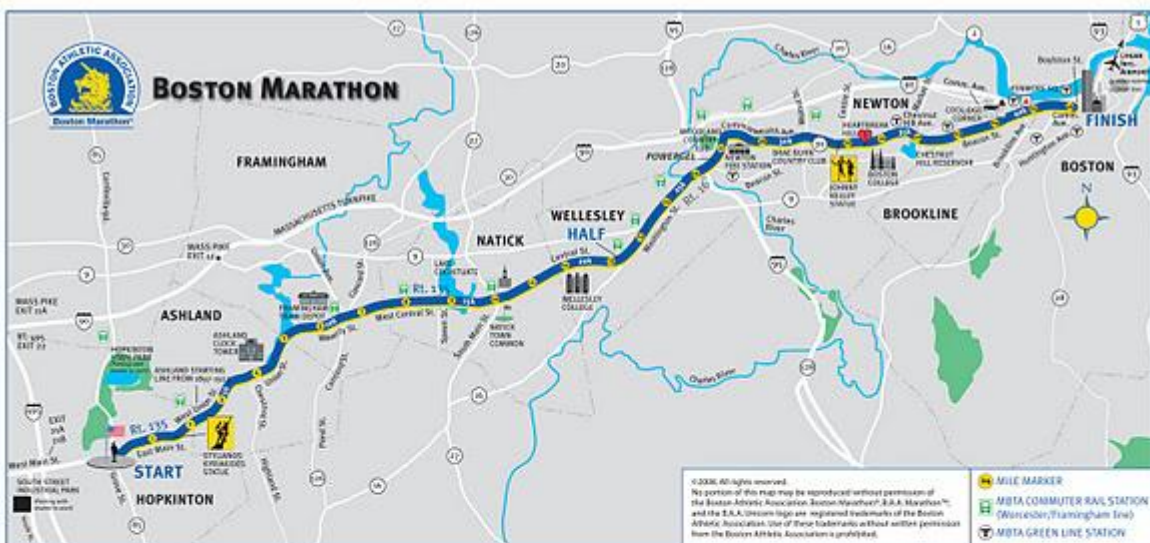
Up to 1946, Boston marathon was not well organized. The course was full of cars of officials, politicians, and journalists as well as many police motorcycles, all emitting blue fumes from their exhaust pipes, making it difficult for the runners to see and breathe. The runners literally had to zig zag to avoid the cars. It was not until 1947 that the BAA tried to control this after numerous complaints.

The two athletes crossed the last uphill part at the 20-mile mark, with Kyriakides a few yards behind Kelley. But there were 6 more miles to go, so the race was wide open.

In his bio Johnny Kelley mentions that “at Lake Street he held a 20-yard lead over Kyriakides. He looked back and it was hard to find him because of the maze of official vehicles and seven jockeying press cars that spewed clouds of carbon monoxide everywhere”. Indeed, both runners were so obscured by the bluesmoke fumes and maneuvering autos that many people lining the streets missed much of the dramatic duel between the two front runners. Disappointed spectators booed and catcalled at the passing convoy. This was the final year that the large contingent of race vehicles was allowed on the course. Starting in 1947, B.A.A. president Walter Brown would allow only three press buses along the route. From Cleveland Circle to Coolidge Corner, Johnny put on another spurt that increased his lead to 35 yards, and as he later said in his memoirs, this final sprint was a mistake. “When I got to Cleveland Circle, I felt so good I thought, I am gonna leave this fella and I sprinted ahead. In about a quarter of a mile I was dead, I couldn't move”.

George Demeter very wisely had placed Greek people to wait in mile 23 to 25 to cheer, help and support Stelios in the last two-three miles. In fact, one of them got so excited that he jumped out of the crowd to offer him an orange and tried to embrace him, throwing Stelios off balance, causing him nearly to fall, staying further behind Kelley. Demeter knew that if Stelios managed to reach that point of the race being first or even close to the leaders, he would need psychological support from his compatriots. He could increase his pace and try to be in the first 3 places which would be an incredible feat. Entering Cleveland circle, people were cheering, hoping that their own Irish Johnny Kelley would be the winner for the second consecutive year and the third in total in his long career. They were yelling “Go Johnny...go Johnny”. Running down Beacon Street, Kelley held a 60-yard lead. At this point Stelios heard a Greek shouting “Stelio, you are doing well, you will finish second”. As he said later in many interviews in Greece, that was the wakening call for him. “I took a deep breath and I said to myself. Why second, I will finish first”.

Jerry Nason who was in a car nearby at the time told Stelios, “Stelio time to go, Johnny is tired”. With a mile and a half to go Kyriakides made his move and went right past Kelly. He was flying, he knew that he would win



The historic course starts on Main Street in the rural New England town of Hopkinton and follows Route 135 through Ashland, Framingham, Natick, and Wellesley to where Route 16 joins Route 135. It continues on Route 16 through Newton Lower Falls to Commonwealth Avenue, turning

right at the fire station onto Commonwealth which is Route 30. It continues on Commonwealth through the Newton Hills, bearing right at the reservoir onto Chestnut Hill Avenue to Cleveland Circle. The route then turns left onto Beacon Street continuing to Kenmore Square,

and then follows Commonwealth Avenue inbound. The course turns right onto Hereford Street (NOTE: against normal traffic flow) then left onto Boylston Street, finishing near the John Hancock Tower in Copley Square.



The Boston course

The last miles of the race from Cleveland circle to Beacon Street and to Kenmore square and finally to Commonwealth Avenue and Exeter Street were crowded with people. Stelios was already in Commonwealth Avenue increasing the distance between him and Kelley, who could not fight anymore. Kelley would lose once again from his friend, like in Berlin in 1936, and he would finish in second place in 2h31'37", 2 minutes and 10 seconds behind Kyriakides, or about 600 yards.

One of the reports said, that the face of Kyriakides in the last mile, was like “a face out of a bronze sculpture”, so distant and without expression completely concentrated on his task. They realized that this “fairytale” would have a happy ending for this Greek hero. Running down Boylston Street Kyriakides was flying.

He had already covered over 26 miles and there was another 200 yards to go. Every part of his body was in alert...his whole body was hovering...between the “before” and the “after”. Every running step was taking him towards the Pantheon, towards immortality. He was aware of that. He had been dreaming of this silently, for eight years now... since 1938, when he was in the leading group of runners and feeling good, until the blisters started forming in the soles of his feet, and the blood started oozing inside his shoes. He was now in the final stretch, he could see the finish line.

This was the moment that Stelios Kyriakides had been striving for, the perfect end, the perfect end to a 36-year-long journey. Right there in the finish line of the most famous marathon in the world, that of Boston. The 20th of April 1946 was the Holy Saturday for the Greeks, the biggest celebration of the Greek Orthodox Church, the resurrection of Jesus Christ at midnight.

Thousands of people were watching, seeing this skinny Greek literally “flying” to the finish line, after almost six years with no food, not having run in any race and with minimum training. For every running step he made, people cheered. Many photographers were capturing the final, glorious moments of the 50th Boston marathon. Nothing would be the same for him ever again.

This is the marathon that was established by those pioneer BAA members and athletes, when they were back from the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. John Graham, a B.A.A. member and manager of the US Olympic team, had the idea to organize a marathon like the one in Athens, to celebrate the struggle for liberty of Greece and the USA. It is “the marathon of marathons” for the US and at the same time, the most famous marathon in the world. It is organized every year since 1897.

In 1946, the first time after World War II, the joy of life, hope, optimism, love, filled the atmosphere once again. The 1946 Boston marathon was the first major athletic event after the war.

As he ran with the sun behind him, his figure was imprinted all over the hard road surface. Both of his feet were in the air, flying. On his face, a face full of concentration, as Johnny Kelley later said, one could also see the intensity of purpose. His hardships...his expectations...In the last few kilometers, he managed to outrun his opponent by two minutes. Overtaking the leading Johnny Kelley at the last two miles, he managed to run the last kilometer in the amazing time of three minutes.



This is the most representative photo of Boston marathon 1946, with Kyriakides literally flying to the finish line.

Can Stelios' soul fly...it can.

Right in front of him, in every step he took, his whole life unfolded. Every important event from the time he was born, two months premature, the youngest of the five children of Ioannis Kyriakides and Eleni Ilia in Statos, the small mountainous village in Paphos. His childhood, the games with the other kids of the village. The long walks with his father and brothers on their way to the city of Paphos, 35 kilometers away. Almost a marathon every week. His graduation from primary school at the age of fourteen, which only had one classroom for all the students,

In the last few meters his body is shaking with anticipation. Only the power of gravity keeps his body to the ground. He wants to scream... to yell ...he has so much to say...about this incredible journey, since the age of fourteen, when his father sends him away to work in the big city of Limassol and discover the world. A journey through a path that was meant to bring him here, in Boston, making hundreds of stops on the way.

Can his soul fly...it can.

To Doctor Reginald Cheverton, his first mentor. To February 1933, when in the middle of the night, a skinny young man climbed over the wall, entered the track of the "Olympia" Running Club, and started running. To his first coach, Pavlos Agelinidis, and his OLYMPIA running club. To his first Pan Cyprian Games where he won the 5K and the 10K. To his first wins in the Pan Hellenic games and his big mentor and friend Otto Simitzek. To his first international wins in the Balkan games and to his first big races in Europe, to the 1936 Olympics and the 1938 Boston marathon.

Can his soul fly...it can.

To the four and a half years of the German occupation during which he saw so many of his friends and neighbors perish in the war or die from hunger and disease. To the nearly complete destruction of his country. To the civil war that then raged and divided Greece, destroying the little that was left standing. To the hope that all this would finish soon. He dreamt of bringing this victory as a present to his country, a token of his unconditional love. The epitome of all he had achieved as an athlete from 1933 to that moment.

Stelios Kyriakides was thinking in those last seconds before the finish line that he would ask the Americans to help his country and its people, knowing that they would be generous. "For Greece Stelios, for Greece", he kept saying to himself during those final moments of the race that would engrave his name on history.

As he crossed the finish line, he shouted, "FOR GREECE" and stopped his watch as if he wanted to freeze the time and that moment, at 2 hours, 29 minutes and 27 seconds, which was a new National and European record and the best time in the world that year.

And now Stelios is flying high...

At that moment he saw the happy and smiling face of his friend George Demeter on his left, holding the laurel wreath decorated with blue and white ribbons, the colors of the Greek flag. He placed it on his head while the speaker said, “Ladies and gentlemen. He comes from the country of Leonidas and the 300 Spartans, from the country that said NO to the German Axis when no one believed that this country would dare to resist the Germans. Applaud him, he is Stylianos Kyriakides, the winner of the race, who writes his own history today, in the book of his eternal country which is the spiritual country for all of us.”

Hundreds of Greek-Americans were crying with happiness, dancing, and yelling “Hellas, Hellas!” along with Stelios’ name.



The famous kiss after the race, and the Governor congratulating the winner.

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KYRIAKIDES WINS FOR GREECE

By JERRY NASON

(Editor's Note: Much has been written on the victory scored in Boston last week by Stylianos Kyriakides who soon that city's famed Marathon. But nothing has stirred readers more than this brilliant piece by one of the Boston Globe's finest writers, Jerry Nason.)

The thin, dark man from Greece, who had known the pangs of hunger, feasted his eyes on the laurel wreath which he had wrested from Johnny Kelley in a savage tussle on the homestretch of the Marathon race.

He, the modern Pheidippides, had sped over 26 miles and 385 yards of American macadam to earn this heritage which abounds in great profusion on the hillsides of Athens.

Ironic? No! Proudly he raised it. It represented 2 hours, 29 minutes, 27 seconds of blazing determination—for he was the man with a mission.

"This wreath," said Stylianos Kyriakides, 36, a bill collector for an Athens utilities company, "this I give to my little kid!"

Victory in a fairy-story Marathon on the golden anniversary of the Boston A. A. race, which in turn stems from the original Olympic contest in Athens, Kyriakides studied the wreath which George Demeter, his friend, had fashioned for the ultimate Marathon winner.

From it fluttered the brave blue and white ribbons, the Grecian national colors—for Demeter had a premonition that, at last, a Greek citizen would win the Boston cobblestone classic.

"All the time, like I tell you at the start," said Stylianos, "I have the feeling that I am going to win. Once, I think of my wife, and the two kiddies. You don't believe it, but many times they have only peas—just a few peas—to eat."

Tears burst through the dam of happiness which had held back this grim-running Greek's true incentive for running, and winning—help for the destitute and hungry seven millions of Greece.

They were brave tears, and Kyriakides let them fall—unashamed. Johnny Kelley, the man he ran into the road in a stretch rush for which the script was snatched from Hollywood—well, Kelley's eyes filled up, too.

"Stanley," said John, with the grace of the vanquished for the victor, "nobody deserved to win today more than you!" John slipped his arm over the Greek's shoulder. Kyriakides brushed the tears away with his arm, gave Kelley a squeeze. "Johnny," he said, "you fine boy."

He pronounces it Keer-ee-ah-kee-dees, and he is a man in whose breast burns the fierce fires of national loyalty, and whose mission in this country was to win, if possible, and promote American assistance for his impoverished and hungry countrymen.

To Globe readers Stylianos is no stranger, for he first came here in 1938, when this writer first wrote of him... for, with Demeter at the wheel, he took Kyriakides over the Marathon course, introduced him to the Newton hills, explained every twist and turn of the long march to Boston.

He was a young man, then—young, and handsome, with a fine smile that made you open your heart to him. That was before the Germans came to Greece, and young men like Stylianos became hungry and cold, and sold all their fine clothes to get food for their starving families.

The history of those grim years are etched in the brown, travel-wrinkled features of this man with the mission.

At any rate, Kyriakides failed in 1938. Accustomed to running upon a soft dirt course, his underpinning became broken, smashed and bloody travesties of feet in the Marathon—and while he fought on, past the limits of ordinary men,



S. KYRIAKIDES

he finally retired from the contest at Lake St.

He returned to Greece, crestfallen, but with a promise on his lips. "Some day," he said, when he came in to say goodbye, "some day I come back—and maybe I win your Marathon!"

He never ran another step for three months, because his feet were badly beaten up.

A few days later his friend, the great Johnny Kelley who finished second, when asked "Johnny how did you lose the first place to this skinny Greek?" Johnny answered "How could I beat him? I was running for myself, and he was running for 7 million Greeks".

I DID IT FOR MY COUNTRY

'It Was Win or Die,' Says Greek Marathoner



WORD FROM HOME AIDS VICTORY

By STYLIANOS KYRIAKIDES
As Told to Miss Gately

I did my best for Greece but it was a victory for America as well as for my homeland. If I hadn't seen for those American stars, I'd probably never have held up to the finish. I've put on at least five pounds in the 23 days I've been here. That was the difference in defeat and victory for me.

There'll be a National Stadium throughout the continent tomorrow because I won. At home they regard this, victory on the world's greatest sporting event.

I know from the very start that 24 was the race. I had no money to buy me on. All the way, I could see my country's flag waving at me. In my mind, my country—it was there in front of me and I kept running for it. Then when you came through stadium, I could see the crowd waving and I heard the cheers. The prize was the last word of pep I needed to cross the line.

I was filled with sadness when I stepped to the starting line. Only this morning, I received a letter from my daughter, Helen. I couldn't read it because my eyes were so red. She told me she wanted me to win so I had to run. The greatest Greek marathoner took his name to me as he thought of his daughter, wondering when she'd become of the first step. Then George's was against the last moment.

When I left Greece for the first time, I was in a state of mind. I was in a state of mind. I was in a state of mind. I was in a state of mind.

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK—They supposedly open a restaurant but in this case, it's George Demeter, at extreme right, rushing with the laurel wreath to crown Stylianos Kyriakides who came all the way from Greece to register a stunning upset and

win the B. A. A. marathon. That message spoken by Pheidippides when he ran from Marathon to Athens shouting "joice, we rescue!" came to life again yesterday.

(By Miss Gately)

The four finest runners of the world...

CHAPTER VI

THE PATRIOTIC WORK - BOSTON 1946 and 1947

In 1945 Stelios made the big decision to go back to Boston and run the marathon. But what prompted him to this decision?

Stelios understood that since the Nazis were defeated in 1944, Europe had started slowly reuniting and rebuilding with the help of America, while Greece was in the start of a civil war, which was much worse than the occupation. Fathers were killing their children, relatives were killing their families and friends, whoever was on the other political and ideological side. There seemed to be no solution in site. Stelios had seen some of his close friends die.

He was a sensitive, selfless man, who always put the well-being of others first and always tried to help people in need. He was also farsighted, something he had proven many times through his training programs, running techniques and race tactics. On the matter of Greece, he believed that the only way he could contribute to the reunion and rebuilding of his country was to ask America for help.

Being an “ordinary” but gifted person, with the ability to run the “marathon” distance, a historic event whose history shaped “Western Civilization and Democracy”, he thought that if he returned to Boston again to run the most famous marathon in the world, he could publicize the horrific state that Greece was in, compared to the rest of Europe. He also thought that if he could bring aid from the USA, that could also help to reconcile his compatriots’ differences.

So, what Stelios accomplished in 1946 with his win in Boston, during his stay for about a month in the USA, is without any doubt a PATRIOTIC act.

After his famous visit to DC, the Truman government decided to help Greece with approximately 25,000 tons of grain, tinned food, medicine, tents, and other essential things that arrived soon after, with two Liberty ships belonging to a Greek shipping family.

The American Government named this aid the “KYRIAKIDES AID PACKAGE”. In addition, Stelios managed to collect about USD 250,000 from donations of ordinary American people and corporations that were inspired by his actions. In my archive I even have letters from young children sending their weekly pocket money, to the children in Greece. He also brought back a lot of clothing as well as bulls and cows, given by the New England farmers. Most of the clothing was distributed to the people in the area around where he lived, with the participation of Mrs Tsaldari, the wife of the Greek Prime Minister of the time. There are photos in the archive.

When Stelios came back to Greece on the 23rd of May, 33 days after his victory, the day was declared a national holiday. A crowd of somewhere between 700,000 and one million people from all over Greece gathered to greet him upon his arrival.

A normally thirty-minute drive from the airport to the Greek Parliament in the center of Athens turned into an eight-hour-long motor parade, because all the people wanted to see Stelios and hear him talk. And the stops were many. That was the first day since the beginning of WWII that the Greek people had something to smile about. That night Acropolis was lit for the first time since the beginning of the occupation in 1941 in honor of Stelios Kyriakides, despite the darkness and fear of the civil war. It was a sign that, at least on that day, the Greeks had come together to salute and thank their Hero.

During all his speeches, Stelios talked to his compatriots about his campaign in the USA and thanked the country and the American people for helping his beloved country. He also pleaded with the Greek people to “unite” and work hard to rebuild their devastated country.

All the Greek newspapers had been covering the story since the day of his Boston win on the 20th of April, documenting his campaign ever since. On the front page of the most popular sports newspaper in Greece “ATHLETIC VOICE” on the 23 of April 1946 Kyriakides was called, ΗΜΙΘΕΟΣ, a “Demi-God”.

But Stelios Kyriakides did not stop there. Despite his great popularity he remained humble, always envisioning the next step. And soon, the next opportunity appeared.

The first Olympic Games after the war were to be held in London in August 1948. Greece was a bankrupt nation, divided and in the middle of a civil war. The Greek track and field “dream team” of the 30s had not trained or competed since the beginning of the war, but they dreamt of competing in London. Sadly, there was no training equipment, no athletic shoes, no clothing and of course no money to send a team to the Olympics. Kyriakides could not imagine the Olympics without Greece carrying proudly the national flag through the stadium during the opening ceremony.

Naturally, he thought once more of Boston and the USA, the only country he could turn to for help. He wrote a letter to George Demeter explaining his plan. The Demeter family and the Greek American community in Boston replied that they would be too happy to help.

Stelios was now 37 years old. He planned the trip to the US and took with him his best friend, the younger Thanasis Ragazos, an excellent marathon runner who had taken his place as the number one long-distance runner in Greece. They travelled by plane to the USA, first reaching New York and then Boston. Once in Boston, Kyriakides visited Jerry Nason and explained his aim. The Bostonian press immediately spread the news and the people rushed to help. Stelios needed to gather about USD 50,000 to cover the preparation and travel expenses of the team.

The American people once again responded, with the Cypriot and the Greek Americans taking a lead. He was once again invited to DC. President Truman ordered to send to the Greek Federation second-hand equipment from the American universities, along with new athletic shoes and clothing.

THIS SHOULD BE TERRIFIC By Gene Mack



Champs May Slow Down Marathon De Mar Theory Boosts Chances of Dark Horse

The BOSTON GLOBE APRIL 18, 1947



1947 - Kyriakides and Ragazos training in the streets of Boston.



The appeal to help the Greek team for the London Olympics

The 1947 Boston marathon, after the previous year's huge publicity, was open to foreign runners who eagerly rushed to participate. A 24-year-old Korean named Yun Bok Suh was the winner of the race, while Ragazos came 6th in 2h35'24" and Kyriakides 10th in 2h39'13", with Kelley just behind him in the 13th place in 2h40'00". Ragazos also came 3rd in 1951. One of the participants was the winner of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Sohn Kee Chung, who would become a close friend of Kyriakides fifteen years later.

The money and the equipment from the USA arrived in Greece in good time and the Greek team had time to train and participate in the Olympics with good results. What a relief and, again, what a Patriotic achievement. Stelios was now the first runner in the world to "RUN FOR A CAUSE".

In 1947, the "Truman Doctrine" started after a speech delivered by President Truman before a joint session of the Congress on March 12, 1947. The reason for the speech was the announcement by the British Government that, as of March 31, England could no longer provide military and economic assistance to the Greek Government because of the civil war. Truman asked Congress to support the Greek Government against the Communists. The history channel mentions:

"On March 12, 1947, President Truman gave a speech, broadcast over national radio, in which he asked Congress for \$400 million in economic aid to Greece and Turkey to contain communism".

Many people in the USA confirm that the two visits to DC of Stelios Kyriakides in 1946 and 1947 affected the US Government's decision to assist Greece before any other country in Europe.

These I believe can be considered the two most important PATRIOTIC achievements of Stelios Kyriakides, among many other things he did for his country.



1947 Kyriakides and Ragazos relaxing with other runners before the start

CHAPTER VII

EUROPEAN GAMES 1946 AND OLYMPIC GAMES 1948

In August 1946 Kyriakides ran in the 3rd European Games marathon in Oslo, Norway, the first after WWII. He was one of the favorites to win, because of his earlier win in Boston, but he had to drop out halfway due to severe cramps. His friend Thanasis Ragazos finished 9th in 2h32'58". They were running side by side when Kyriakides decided to drop out, saying to his friend, "Thanasi, please now run for me too".

While in Oslo Stelios bought a very advanced Scandinavian-made bicycle that was the envy of everybody in Greece. Since Kyriakides never owned a car and travelled by bus, the bike was particularly useful for travelling in the areas near his house in Filothei. Everybody who saw the bike parked somewhere knew that Kyriakides was around.



The credentials and medals of the 1946 European Games



Oslo, 1946. On the left, Kyriakides at the start, ready to click his wrist stopwatch.

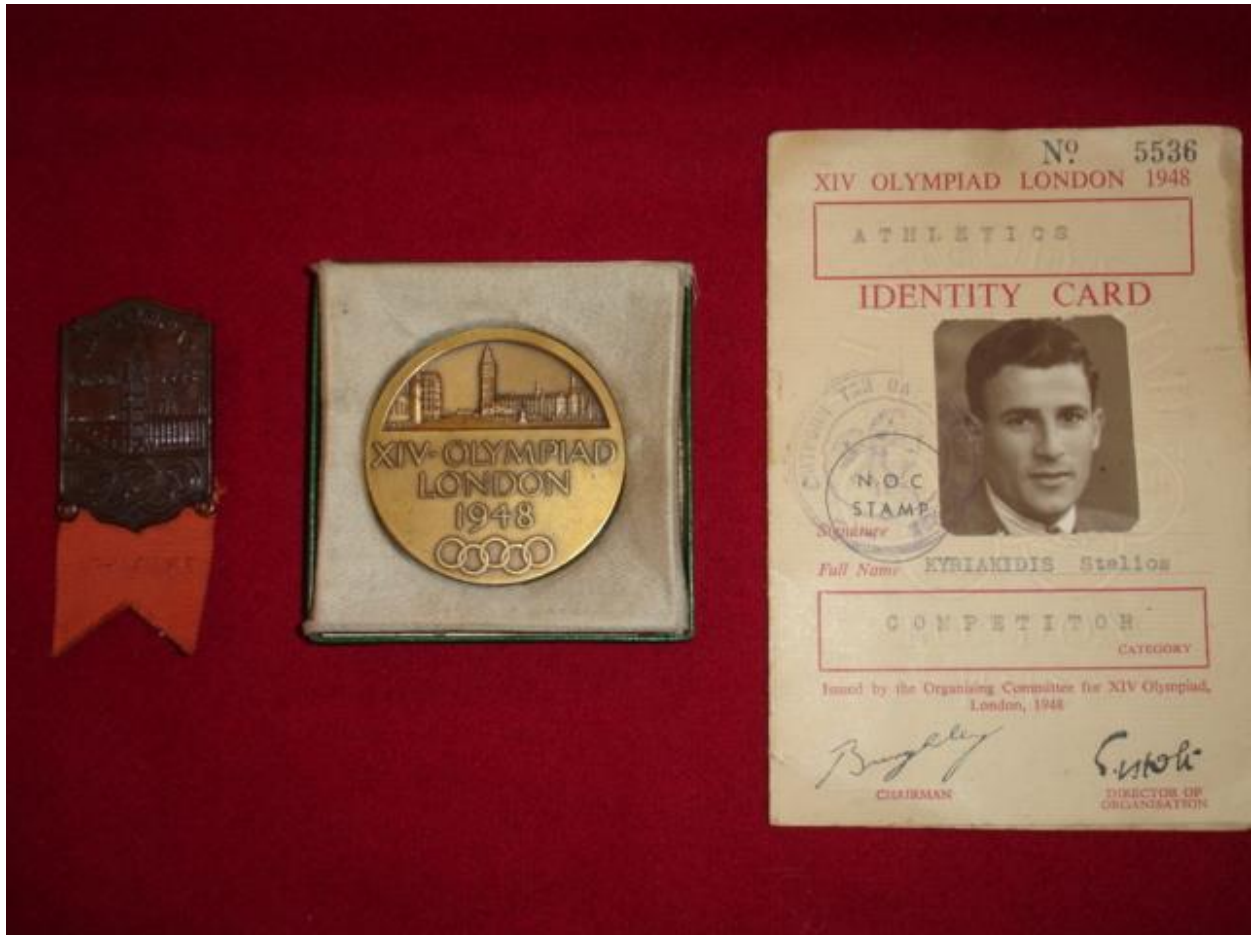
After receiving help from the US, during Stelios' last visit to Boston in 1947, the Greek team was able to train and had the necessary clothing to travel and participate in the first Olympic Games after WWII in London. The Greek team traditionally entered first in the White City stadium, waving proudly the blue and white flag, with the hope in their hearts that the civil war would end soon.

The London Olympic marathon was another memorable and dramatic race like the 1908 London Olympics. On the day of the race, the low temperature suddenly rose and by the time of the race it was hot and humid, so 14 out of 44 entries dropped out due to dehydration, and many others fainted after crossing the finish line. In a dramatic finish, the leader, Belgium's Etienne Gailly, entered the White City stadium first staggering, suffering from severe dehydration and was overtaken in front of a stunned crowd by the eventual winner, the Argentinian Cabrera and the Englishman Richards.



1948 London Olympics, Kyriakides at the start wearing 267.

Stelios Kyriakides, although being again a pre-race favorite, also suffered from dehydration and finished 18th in 2h49'00". The USA runners Ted Vogel and Johnny Kelley finished 14th in 2h34'51" and 21st in 2h51'56" respectively and both fainted after crossing the finish line. The winner was the Argentinian Delfo Cabrera in 2h34'51".



1948 Olympic Games memorabilia and below Greece's "dream team".



CHAPTER VIII

LIFE AFTER 1949 – The family life.

When Kyriakides came back from London in August 1948, he started planning his retirement from competitive running.

His athletic life spanned for over sixteen years, despite losing the best six years in a runner's life because of the war. He officially stopped competing in 1949 and started planning his future life.

In the 50s and 60s life was not easy in Greece and our household. Our father was barely earning a living, so he started planting fruits and vegetables in our garden around the house and along with the chickens and rabbits, we managed to have enough food for the family. Although it was not much, he always told us to be thankful to the Lord for what we had. Iphigenia was always there to support him.

By 1950 he completed the construction of the second floor of the family house. The first floor had started in 1947 with the help of the government and donations from ordinary people, with much of the work done by him, and our family finally moved there. The ground floor, which was bigger, was rented for additional income to American families working for the US Military, who were based in Greece helping the country to rebuild.

The American families, having heard who Stelios was and what he had done became good friends with our family and the children played together after school. When the American families went back to the US, they would leave many of their belongings to us, including American appliances, furniture, toys, clothes, bed linen and other technologically advanced things for Greece at that time, and that made our daily life much easier.

His number one priority had always been his family, his beloved wife Iphigenia who had devotedly supported him during the past eight years and his three children, Eleni seven, Dimitris five, and Maria one year old.

Kyriakides was a farsighted person and liked to plan, as he had proven time and time again in the past. Having gained experience from his international travels and his interesting, well-educated, and influential acquaintances, he understood the importance of providing all his children with good education.

He also felt that his and Iphigenia's duty as parents was to teach their children to be good members of society, to be "team players", to be compassionate and to replace the word "I" with the word "WE".

Not having had the chance to receive good schooling, he knew that good education was the way for his children to have better chances in life. He was ready to use his fame and the adoration that the Greek people showed him, to achieve that.

Greece was still in ruins, and everything had to be rebuilt from scratch. The education system after nine years of war was at a lamentable state. In 1952, despite the objections of his wife Iphigenia, he made the decision to send Eleni who was entering grade four of grammar school at age nine, and Dimitri who was entering grade two at age seven, to Cyprus, where the British education system was in much better condition. The Government and his friends in Cyprus helped him with scholarships and both children were accepted in the excellent “Athenaidion” private boarding school. Education in Cyprus was top level, but Iphigenia could not bear losing her children for such a long time and after her strong protests Dimitris returned after one year. Eleni stayed for two years. Thankfully, by the time they returned, things had improved in Greece and the suburb of Filothei, where the family lived had a good grammar school nearby.

When the children finished grammar school, the two girls were accepted to attend the famous “Arsakion” private high school that again was near the house, and Dimitris was accepted in the prestigious “Anavryta” National high school, where the son of the King of Greece was also attending. The Greek authorities gave scholarships to all his children, as a gesture of gratitude towards their National Hero. After the completion of high school, the girls were sent to England to study secretarial, which would help them find good jobs. Dimitris was sent to England and Scotland to study Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering. This kind of studies made sense since the Greeks, coming from a traditionally sea faring nation, were getting involved in the international merchant marine business. In fact, Eleni got a job as the private secretary of Tom Pappas, the famous Bostonian businessman, and later served as US Ambassador to Greece, who established the oil company EXXON in Greece under the brand name “ESSO Pappas”. All three children had successful professional careers, and later prolific personal lives, fulfilling the dream of Stelios and Iphigenia. All three children now live in Greece, while Eleni’s children are currently living in Washington D.C., Dimitri’s two children live in England and Maria’s daughter lives in Greece. All grandchildren are successful in their professions and have done well in their lives, following their grandparent’s principles.



1954, regular exercise routine for the three children in our garden and in the street outside our house. Notice the multi-training equipment that a US family gave us upon their departure.

CHAPTER IX

LIFE AFTER 1949 - Contributions to Greek Athletics, 1949 - 1987

During his athletic career, Kyriakides had won races from 400meters to marathon, had broken many records and more importantly as we said earlier, he was a long-distance runner 50 years ahead of his time, considering his training and running techniques, diet, and healthy lifestyle.

He held the Greek National Record for marathon for 34 years and 6 months, one of the longest in the world, from October 1933 until the 6th of April 1968, according to the GUINNESS book of marathon.

Even though his running career was completely interrupted by the WWII from 1940 to 1945, between the ages of 30 to 35, the best years in a long-distance runner's life, owing to his strong character, he managed to come back at the age of 36 and win the biggest and most famous marathon in the world at the time, with a record-breaking best time.

When Kyriakides retired in 1949, his active running career ended, but a big new chapter in his life began. This part of his life is equally important to the previous part, but for a different reason.

According to the newspapers of the time, as soon as he retired, he immediately started actively assisting to the revival of Greek running and helping local communities organize long distance running, training and events. He had seen what the WWII and the civil war had done to Greek athletics and sports in general and he felt it was his duty to do something about it. In 1951 he was officially elected as a member of the technical committee of the Greek Athletic Federation, SEGAS, where he remained as a member until his death, contributing to Greek Athletics, without any financial benefit. As a member of SEGAS he started officiating in local and international track and field events. At the same time, he realized that for the Greek track and field to revive, there should be basic athletic facilities, accessible to all, where young people could train and follow a healthier lifestyle.

In 1952 he had the vision to build from scratch a new stadium with an athletic track and sports club, in Filothei, where he lived. After a lot of negotiation with the National Bank of Greece that owned the land and had other exploitation plans in mind, he managed to convince them to make available to him a plot of land next to a river that nobody wanted to buy because it was always flooding during the rainy season. The plot was not big enough for a 440-yard track, but it was big enough to build a 250-yard track. Construction started in 1953, employing local labor, many of whom would come to work free of charge for him, after their regular working hours.

He approached companies for donations of cement, bricks, sand, roof tiles, coal dust for the running surface and all other necessary materials. They all responded happily remembering what he had done for them in 1946 and 1947. The Filothei stadium was built with minimum cost and opened in the spring of 1956. The Filothei Athletic Club officially opened and started operating at the same time.

In 1952 only the old generation of good runners could train in the few existing stadiums. Takis Skoulis, one of the most respected long-distance runners in Greece at the time, also referred to as “the Professor”, and the first man to complete the “Pheidippides run” from Athens to Sparta which was a 250K distance, in his 1992 biography mentions that, *“the Filothei Athletic club that Kyriakides founded in 1956 was one of the most progressive and bes-organized clubs in the 60s. I wanted to join it, but the big club that I was a member, would not let me go”*.

Between 1956 and 1987 Kyriakides spent all his free time making sure that the stadium and the athletic club was operating well. He selected good coaches and all the other personnel, making sure that the members connected like a family and that the club was open to all people. People from all the surrounding suburbs started coming to join and train and soon Filothei became the champion club, in the 2nd division.

The nearby American Athens College, where the head coach Nikos Hatzidimitriou, was Stelios’ friend, helped in many ways, especially with the young students that were already training in their own College stadium facility joining the Filothei Club.

In the next years, the club developed many top-class athletes that won World, European, Mediterranean, Balkan and even Olympic gold medals. Katerina Stefanidi, the World, European and Olympic gold medalist in the ladies’ pole vault is one example. The Club also formed a good basketball team that won the Greek second division championship many times. Today the stadium is named after him and the address is Kaliga no 77, his lucky number.

In September 1955, the daily newspaper VRADINI announced that they would start organizing again long-distance races so that new marathon runners can emerge, to participate in the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne. Kyriakides was approached and invited by the newspaper that published his weekly training programs for the runners.

The same year SEGAS in conjunction with VRADINI, decided to organize the first ATHENS INTERNATIONAL MARATHON, to take place every two years and of course Kyriakides was assigned the task to organize it. One can find in the Kyriakides archive the handwritten notes of how he did it single-handedly. In there, one can also find the race rules and regulations, how he measured the distance accurately, where to place the supply stations, about the cars and buses for the officials and runners and all the other details.

The ATHENS INTERNATIONAL MARATHON started and was held every two years from 1955 until 1978, with Kyriakides organizing the event. About 25-40 Greek and famous international runners were taking part at the time. In 1979 and 1980 the race organization was re assigned by the Federation to a private tourist company until the Federation took over again in 1981 and Kyriakides was once again involved.

Many of the world's top runners of the time including Bikila Abebe, the Ethiopian Olympic winner in 1960 and 1964, top Fins, Japanese, Yugoslavs, Turks, British, Hungarian, and other runners, took part in this marathon. It is notable that from 1955 to 1980, apart from Boston and the National marathons of the different countries, there were no other marathons as there are today.



Kyriakides officiating the Athens International marathon in 1959. The young children threw flower petals to the runners standing near the Marathon tumulus.

In April 1955, Payton Jordan, the famous US Track and Field coach was invited by the Greek Federation to come to Greece, to train the Greek coaches on the modern coaching techniques, over a period of four months. Kyriakides was given the task by the Federation to be with him 24/7 to help and translate and the two became close friends.

Later Jordan talks very warmly about his friend in the 2004 NBC documentary [“Stylianos Kyriakides, the journey of a warrior”](#) that won the EMMY award that year. (Search in YouTube)

In the 50s and 60s many people remember Stelios riding his famous bicycle around Filothei. Kyriakides had bought that bike in Oslo in 1946, when he was visiting for the European games. It was of a very advanced design compared to Greek standards, with gears and reverse pedal brakes. Unfortunately, one day around 1970 the bike disappeared from outside the Filothei stadium where he always left it. I remember how sad he was to lose his beloved bicycle.

The following years of his life were very active and prolific, as you will read later. The man would never stop. He ran multiple projects at any time, all of which were based on the principle of helping people and communities with sports and humanitarian work, without ever thinking of “what is in it for me”.

The Greek and the International society recognized and appreciated that and throughout the rest of his life and after he passed away in 1987, people admired and honored him.

I always say to people, something that I think about every day. Kyriakides may have passed away, but his spirit and his presence are always near us, supporting us, guiding us, and encouraging us. I have met many runners who told me that when they run the marathon and they come to the point of “hitting the wall” they all think of Stelios, and they overcome their problem. I have also met many people who knew him and have said to me that in the difficult moments in their life they think of him, and their spirits are lifted.

CHAPTER X

LIFE AFTER 1949 - Humanitarian work

During the years of the 50s and 60s, I remember many unemployed people coming to our house to ask Stelios to help them find work because of his many connections. Stelios never said no, he always tried to help.

It is important to talk about and analyze this part of Kyriakides life, because the span of 37 years is bigger in time than the athletic part.

To be a big champion is not easy, but it is not difficult either. If you have the talent, the dedication, the will, and the means, you can succeed. There are many champions around the world. What is important however, is how one uses his talent and fame after one retires, for the benefit of their community and the world. And please don't confuse that humanitarian work with today's very rich professional athletes, whose charity is always deducted from their taxes and the big publicity they gain in social media.

It is important also to have in mind that all his athletic, patriotic, and humanitarian achievements were done in exceedingly difficult times during WWII and the German occupation, as well as during the civil war and the rebuilding of a nation from scratch when he had not a penny in his pocket.

Greece went through extremely difficult times from 1940 to 1970 and maybe a little after. A big part of the population emigrated in the US, Australia, Germany, Sweden, Brazil, South Africa, and Argentina to seek employment. And yet Kyriakides although he had the chance to escape and stay in the USA where he could have had a bright future, he decided to stay in Greece and help his country rebuild. All this was done without any personal benefit or gain.

It is interesting to mention here, that after his victory in 1946 he had offers to run professionally in the US for USD 10-15,000 per race, and he was even approached by MGM studios of Hollywood who offered him a 10-year contract worth USD 400,000 to become an actor. He was after all a handsome man, extremely appealing to the ladies. But Kyriakides was never a man who thought "how can I profit" but always "how can we all work together for the benefit of all". The later part of his life is a good lesson modern-day people, especially for the younger generation that is the future of this world.

When in 2004 the Greek National Football team came back as the champions of the European Championship, and one million people flooded the streets to welcome the team, the older newspaper reporters covering the occasion, said that it reminded them of the Kyriakides welcome back in 1946.

From 1952 to 1987, he was the pillar of the Filothei local community in all its activities. During the war and civil war, the Boy Scout movement in Greece had all but died. Around 1953 Kyriakides helped revive the Scouts in Filothei and assisted his friends in the nearby suburbs to do the same. He also restarted the Girl Scouts.

On the 23rd of April 1960, the King of Greece awarded him the highest honor of the International Scout movement the “Gold Iovileon” emblem. In 1963 he was involved in the successful organization of the 11th World Boy Scout Jamboree in the city of Marathon, near Athens. The same year in September, the King of Greece, awarded him the GOLD CROSS OF THE PHOENIX MEDAL, the most prestigious Greek award for “services to the country”.

In Filothei he helped the local council organize different events and festivities for the community and he assisted the local schools in their events. In February of 1960 during the Carnival festivities, he organized a typical evening event to raise money for a cause, and to make it more appealing he invited and managed to bring to the event, the famous Hollywood actress of the time Jayne Mansfield and her husband Mickey Hargitay. Jane was in Greece at the time for the filming of “It happened in Athens”. I was the translator for the famous couple.

Of course, he also supported all the surrounding suburbs every time they needed him. Do not forget that he was a celebrity, and his presence was the highlight of any event. His low-profile character and his very warm personality made everybody eager to meet him and comfortable to be around him. He was also a good organizer and a capable person, so event organizers reached out to him for help and guidance. Stelios never failed to show his support for anything that was for a good cause. In the mid-50s, three of Kyriakides relatives from Cyprus, came to Athens as young priests from the famous KYKOS monastery to study theology at the University of Athens. The oldest one was Chrysostomos, who later became the Archbishop of Cyprus, the other one was Grigorios who later became the Bishop of Kiriania. The young priests were in our house every Sunday after the church service for lunch. Kyriakides was there to help and support the young priests. He was a religious man that supported the Church and every Sunday he attended the service.



Easter Sunday, lamb of the spit, with the young priests and friends

As I said before, the 50s and the 60s were especially difficult times for all the people in Greece. The economic suffering and unemployment in the country caused people to struggle daily. Food was in short supply. The Kyriakides family depended on his salary and the overtime work he did. Despite the family hardships, Kyriakides was always ready to share the little he had with the less fortunate. From time to time, he used to bring to the house orphans from the streets of Athens and care for them for a few days until he helped enroll them in a government-sponsored school to study.

The story of Alekos Filipides made headlines in 1963. On that year, the Swedish Junior team for men and women came to Greece to compete, in an attempt for the Greek youth to see how an advanced European country trains its young athletes. This was an idea of Kyriakides. Of course, Stelios oversaw the project as the only English-speaking member of the Greek Athletic Federation. One day the team training session was over and the young athletes boarded their bus to return to their hotel. When they arrived at the hotel and were disembarking, a 10-year-old boy approached them asking for help and some food. The boy's father had died, and the mother had disappeared, so he was living in the streets. The young Swedish girls of the team immediately showed interest and asked Stelios to take care of the boy. Alekos was brought to our house where he stayed for several days, until my father did all the necessary paperwork and enrolled the young boy in a government school. The Swedes later invited both Alekos and Stelios to Sweden. Alekos all his life called Stelios "Father". Kyriakides had helped many other orphan boys and girls the same way in those difficult times.

During the 60s and 70s he travelled abroad many times as a leader of the Greek National team accompanying athletes or small groups of athletes that competed abroad. His name, his good personality and good English was a big advantage for the teams. For the same reasons he also welcomed all the famous foreign athletes and VIPs invited to Greece by the Federation.

The OLYMPIA running club of Cyprus was the club that he had joined in 1933 and where he remained as a member until he died. Many top clubs in Greece asked him to join them but Kyriakides was adamant about this issue. He always said that "[I will never leave the club where I started running](#)". After he stopped running, he became the official representative of the club in Greece and whenever Cypriot runners came to Greece, he would look after them. From 1960 to 1980 he was the first contact of many Cypriots that came to Athens for medical reasons, and he always tried to assist them. In fact, if a Cypriot went to the Cyprus Embassy for help, the people in the Embassy many times, they privately told them, "[We advise you to go to Kyriakides to solve your problem](#)".

In 1968 the ROAD RUNNERS CLUB of England inducted him as a MEMBER because of his services to the marathon running movement.

In April 1968 Dimitris Vouros broke his Greek marathon record that Stelios held for 34 years and 6 months. In April 1969, he accompanied Vouros to run in Boston and there he met again his two friends, Johnny Kelley, and Jerry Nason. The meeting was very emotional for all three.

In 1979 Freddy Germanos the Master of Greek documentaries in one of his weekly programs on Greek TV station ET1 invited Kyriakides, with some other personalities of the sport. In the middle of the program, Freddy gets up and said to Stelios. “**And now Stelios I have a surprise for you**”. Freddy revealed a beautiful cup and said. “**Stelio, my dear friend, this cup is for you, from 9 million Greeks, who say thank you**”. Stelios was in tears.

And in 1981, Freddy again, produced a beautiful documentary for him, talking about the Boston 1946 race. In the documentary Kyriakides reminisces and talks live about that incredible experience. In that documentary he expresses his gratitude to the Bostonians and the American people.

In 1986 he gave his Boston vest, his 77 bib and running shoes as well as some other memorabilia to the Cyprus Olympic Committee Museum. The Olympic Committee of Cyprus has named the main conference room in their offices the “**STELIOS KYRIAKIDES**” room.

During all his late life he was honored by many athletic clubs, committees, and organizations for his services to the country and the sport.

In the autumn of 1987 he was still healthy, but in late September he started experiencing fatigue and needed to have a siesta, something very unusual to hear from him. After many tests that showed nothing, the family decided to take him to the IGIA hospital, for full checks and scans. After ten days he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. Multiple myeloma is a cancer that forms in a type of white blood cells called the plasma cells. He entered the hospital on the 26th of October, and he died six weeks later, on the 10th of December. I later realized that these two days did not occur by accident. My father had chosen them carefully. These two days are my Name Day and my Birthday.



The newspapers were full of articles and photos of his funeral.

In later years, soon after 1994, my father started appearing in my life at night or during daytime and we communicated. When he appears, he makes it obvious that he is there. A number 7, his lucky number, or some other sign will be somewhere around in a visible way. Sometimes I suddenly have tears in my eyes or start crying without reason, but the tears are happy tears, and then I feel him near me.

A good example occurred in 2016. His OLYMPIA Athletic club in Cyprus had organized an event to honor him. All the top government and sports people, and more than 300 other people were there. Just behind the speaker's podium, there was a big portrait photo of him in a glass frame. The first to speak was the President of the club. About one minute in his speech the frame fell, the glass broke but the picture stood straight up, looking at us. Somebody picked it up and tried to hide it. At once I got up from my chair, picked up the portrait and placed it somewhere everyone could see. I took the microphone and said. "Dear friends, this was not an accident. Kyriakides is here with us tonight, and he wanted to let us know that he is here. What else could he do to prove it". You can imagine what happened. Everybody got up and started cheering.

CHAPTER XI

LIFE AFTER 1987

When Kyriakides died on December 10, 1987, his funeral was arranged by the Greek Government and thousands of people attended.

Three years later his remains were transferred to the beautiful mountain village of Pyrgos where we have a country home. He had asked me to do this before he died because it reminded him of the village he was born in Cyprus. His beloved Iphigenia is resting next to him. Since 1989, we hold a 7.7K run in his name in the village of Pyrgos. Note the 77. Many runners come every year to run and pay their respects to his grave before the race.

In 1996, two Greek Americans decided to write his biography and in October 2001 the book "RUNNING WITH PHEIDIPIDES" was published. Nick Tsiotos and Andy Dabilis came in touch with me, and I gave them material from the archive. The book was published by Syracuse University and was presented together with a special exhibit at the BOSTON SPORTS MUSEUM. A special small documentary was also produced for the event. A permanent exhibit for Kyriakides is there in the same museum.

In 2003, the book was translated in Greek "BORN A WINNER" and was presented at the Deree American College, together with a big exhibition of his memorabilia, organized by the Boston Sports Museum.

The same year a big exhibition was held at the official opening of the new Bissell library of Anatolia American College of the city of Salonika Greece. The exhibition was so successful that it stayed open for 6 months.

In 2003 NBC, decided to make a documentary about Kyriakides to be presented during the Athens Olympic games of 2004. It took 6 weeks to shoot, and I was with them every day. The documentary was shown worldwide before the Olympic marathon race, and it was so popular that it was shown a second time just after the closing ceremony of the Olympics. The documentary won the EMMY award in 2004. In this documentary, Mike Dukakis and Payton Jordan talk warmly about him. Petros Linardos, the famous Greek historian, mentions in the documentary the now famous phrase "In 1946, Kyriakides was Greece".

In 2004 after the airing of the NBC documentary, I was approached by many producers from the USA who wanted to make a film for my father. Paris Kasidokostas and Terry Dougas of 1821 media were among these people. The film will be produced by 1821 PICTURES and distributed by DISNEY. (Search www.1821media.com – films under production)

In 1998 Susan Gates, the lawyer agent that represented the two authors of the book “Running with Pheidippides” contacted Jim Davies, the owner and then CEO of the sports company NEW BALANCE and asked him to finance the creation of a statue of Stylianos Kyriakides, by the famous sculptor Mico Kaufman. The statue is made of metal and is about 15 feet high. Jim Davies is a Greek American, and his father’s surname was Xanthakos.

The first statue was placed in the city of Marathon and was unveiled by the USA Ambassador to Greece, Thomas Miller in April 2004 and an exact replica was unveiled in Hopkinton in April 2006. During the Hopkinton unveiling I met Tim Kilduff for the first time, a meeting that would develop to be a brotherly friendship with a lot of global work, for the promotion of the history of THE SPIRIT OF MARATHON, and the promotion of the legacy of my father.

Later I was introduced to the board members of the 26.2 Foundation, and I was honored to be asked to join as a member of the board of Directors. As of 2010 the 26.6 FOUNDATION in Hopkinton Massachusetts www.26.2-org.com, has Kyriakides as its symbol. Tim and I have travelled to Greece, USA, Cyprus, and China attending marathons, and marathon EXPOs, bringing cities and marathons together. Tim also represents the Stylianos Kyriakides legacy in the USA.

Since 2010 the winners’ Wreaths, made from Olive branches from the city of Marathon, plated with GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE are given by Dimitri and the 26.2 Foundation, in memory of Stelios Kyriakides to the marathon winners of Boston, of Marine Corps in DC, Cape Town in South Africa, Panjin and Danzhou marathons in China, and of three marathons in Cyprus.

From 1987 to this day more than 60 exhibitions, conferences and events have been organized in his memory and more that 20 documentaries and TV interviews have been produced, in the USA, Greece, Cyprus, China, Germany and South Africa, promoting his legacy.

In 2007 almost all his athletic memorabilia of Cups and Medals were lent for display to the Museum of Marathon Run, of the city of Marathon and are still on display there. The museum is visited by thousands of people every year.

In 2012 Mery Crouley in her religious TV program NOW IS THE TIME, presents in the same program Martin Luther King and Stylianos Kyriakides as two people who dedicated their lives for the benefit of our society.

In 2014 a brief Bio in Greek, English and Chinese written by Dimitri, was published, and is distributed free, detailing all the life of Kyriakides, together with the Athletic, Patriotic and Humanitarian achievements. This was updated again in digital form 2018 and in 2020 and is available on the internet.

In 2015 the book “THE SPIRIT OF MARATHON” about Kyriakides, was written by Dimitri and translated in Chinese. More than 30,000 copies have been sold and all the money is given to charity to support young children’s education in the north of China where conditions in the winter are harsh with temperatures of -35 degrees Celsius.

In 2015, I was approached in Boston by Jon Dunham, the acclaimed film director producer, who told me that he was going to produce the first documentary about the history of Boston marathon, and he wanted to include information about 1946 and Kyriakides. After several meetings I gave him material about my father and arranged for his team to come to Greece to film where and how the Boston winner’s gold wreaths are made. In 2017 the documentary was aired in Boston and there is a section about Stelios Kyriakides, between minutes 20 to 23 of the documentary, where Kyriakides is recognized as the first marathon runner to run for CHARITY.

In 2015, I was invited by the organizers, to attend the MANDELA DAY marathon and in front of the Mandela family Kyriakides was honored for his humanitarian work.

Four sculptures of Kyriakides have been unveiled up to now. His bust in Filothei in 1998, the statue in the city of Marathon in 2004, and the same statue in Boston in 2006 and one more statue in his birthplace of Statos, Cyprus in 2010.

Three memorial plaques have been unveiled in 2017, the first in the main square of Pyrgos, where he is buried, the second in Filothei stadium and the third in Paphos in the city’s main stadium. It is significant to know that the locations of these three plaques are important locations because Paphos is the place where he was born, Filothei the place where he spent most of his life and Pyrgos the place where he was buried. The three milestones of a person’s life.

In 2019 the Cyprus Post issued two stamps to honor Kyriakides

In March 2020 the RUNNERS WORLD magazine, in an article about the 13 most important Boston marathons, described 1946 as one of them, also acknowledging that Kyriakides was the first runner to run for Charity.

There are two races held in his memory, a 7.7K in Pyrgos since 1988 a 10K in Filothei since 1989, as well as three marathons. Two in Cyprus and Alexander the Great of Salonica since 2015

As a father he was one of the best. Together with my mother, who was the pillar of the family, they taught us about love, respect, hard work, discipline, commitment, teamwork, compassion and so many other positive things that helped us later in life.

My father was tougher with me than with my two sisters, but I always followed him wherever he went, when I was around. He never pushed me to do sports, but I did and loved middle distance running and cross country in the winter and later I was involved with another 20 different types of sports and had a lot of fun. After training as a kid, he would always massage me with special oils.

My mother Iphigenia, an ancient Greek name, as I already said was the pillar of the house. Coming from the city of Smyrna in Asia Minor, now Turkey, she was a great mother, an excellent cook, and exceptionally good housewife. An incredible mother. Although my mother was a great cook, during Christmas and Easter, the kitchen belonged to my father. Great roast beef and turkey with stuffing, lamb on the spit, the famous Cyprus flaunes and seftalies. A great Master Chef in barbeque.

He had incredible energy. He could not sit still for one minute and he also walked extremely fast. He was a man with positive personality and aura. Everybody wanted to be near him. Although the Filothei Athletic club had two coaches, the young athletes always wanted to ask “Mr. Stelios” his opinion about their performances.

In 1984, when we bought a house and a piece of land in the mountain village of Pyrgos in Peloponnese, my father came to visit for the first time, and he had tears in his eyes. When I asked why, he said, “[This place reminds me of Statos where I was born. When I die you must bury me here.](#)” Pyrgos and Statos are mountain villages at 800 to 1000m height, producing fruit, and looking down to the sea. I think he is very happy there. My mother lies next to him.

As mentioned before, Number 7 dominated his life and he knew it. He was 1.72m high, he won Boston, wearing bib no 77, his time was 2:29:27, he died at the age of 77 in 1987, 1946 was the 7th time that Boston was run on the 20th instead of the usual 19th of April, he won on a Saturday the 7th day of the week, he was the 35th individual winner ($5 \times 7 = 35$) and his passport and ID card had the number 7 in it. The 7s are everywhere.

In 1994 a running club was formed in Limassol by Andreas Angelides, the Ex-Governor of Limassol, and later it was relocated to Paphos. The name of the club is “STELIOS KYRIAKIDES RUNNING CLUB”.

Although he was in good health, suddenly in the late summer of 1987 he started feeling tired and without energy. After thorough examinations in the IGIA hospital it was diagnosed that he suffered for myeloma which is a cancer of plasma cells. He entered the hospital on the 26th of October (my name day) and died 6 weeks later the 10th of December (my birthday). When I went to the hospital accounts department to settle the “big” bill, I was surprised when they told me that the hospital management in a special meeting had decided that there would be no charges for Stelios Kyriakides. They said to me, “*We owe him a lot.*”

He left behind his wife, three children and five grandchildren and was buried initially at the First cemetery of Athens in a big public ceremony, and later we moved him to the village of Pyrgos, the resting place of his choice.

CHAPTER XII

THE “STYLIANOS KYRIAKIDES” ARCHIVE

Early 1994, 7 years after my father’s death, pushed by an inner urge I started clearing up the attic of the family house where I was staying at the time. It was messy, dusty and full of old things since the 50s.

I was halfway through the cleanup when I noticed two cardboard boxes half-hidden in a corner. When I opened them, I found a treasure hiding inside them. I found my father’s athletic clothes, bibs and shoes, the dinner jacket he wore in the official dinners, photos, letters, newspapers and newspaper clippings, poems, sketches, restaurant menus, ID cards, invitation letters and so many other things dating back to 1931.

When I started going through the boxes more carefully, I realized that I had discovered a “gold mine” that I had to study carefully, so that I could create an archive that would be called the “SK (STYLIANOS KYRIAKIDES) ARCHIVE”. It was a task that would take a lot of time.

I asked my daughter Emily to start the work for me. Emily started doing a good job, but she had to stop because she had to leave Greece and travel to the UK to start her studies at Sussex University, in Brighton, where she would study Media.

Every time I came back from a trip abroad, I would carry on with the sorting. But I soon realized that this was not a long-term solution. The material that I had discovered was too much and needed careful study to evaluate each piece of paper I was picking up and to put it in the correct chronological order. I realized that if I continued the way I was going, it would take forever.

So, I decided to take a break from work for a few months and concentrate on the task. It took me about 7 months, working 18/7 to put the material in some order. The more I searched and studied the material I had found, the more I was amazed. But most of all, I was amazed at how, a young man from the poor mountain farming village of Statos, Cyprus, who left school at the age of 14, thought at that time, so early in his athletic career and life, to start collecting EVERYTHING that would later be so useful and would be used to create a proper ARCHIVE, which is now in the hands of the UNIVERSITY of CYPRUS’ new library for research. This material also assisted the writing of the Kyriakides books, in Greek, English and Chinese, over twelve international documentaries, with the NBC documentary winning the EMMY award in 2004, and so many articles on the internet.

I also wondered at the time, why my father had never said to any of us something about this “treasure”. I have spent a lot of time putting the material in better order and since then, the archive has been enriched with material I have found and is always open and updated.

The SK Archive is not useful only to people interested in Kyriakides' legacy, but in it one can follow the history of the Greek and Cypriot athletic, political, economic and social events of the times.

Reading through the numerous newspaper interviews in Cyprus, Greece, and Boston, in which Kyriakides talks about his life, his thoughts and beliefs, it is evident that this young country boy with very limited education had a very open mind, a strong will, a positive and very likeable personality and always put others first. Most of all, he was an extremely humble and low-profile person. In later life, anywhere he went he was the most popular person around, and everybody wanted to talk with him. He never refused to talk to anybody. When I was a young boy, every time we went to Athens together, we had to stop very often in the street because strangers wanted to shake his hand and say, "Stelio, thank you for what you did for us".

The original archive was given to the new library of the University of Cyprus in a special ceremony on the 13th of December 2017. Other memorabilia from the Kyriakides archive and collection have also been given to the "Museum of marathon run" in the city of Marathon, the Museum of the Cypriot Olympic Committee, the Berlin marathon Museum, the Cyprus Sports Federation, his old running club Olympia, and the Cultural Museum of his birthplace Statos-Agios Fotios, Cyprus.

There have been many articles written, as well as short bios, four books and a children's book, many interviews given and many documentaries made, as well as many TV presentations by various people regarding Kyriakides. Most of these productions can be found online. Most of the archive has been scanned in a digital form of about 100GB, while the newspapers being too old and too frail have been preserved as they were. The digital archive is available for everybody on demand.



The SK archive consists of 20 black A4 office files and 4 leather files of newspapers. In the photos Dimitri working on the archive in 2010.



Newspapers from Greece, USA, UK, Norway, Turkey.



RSVP here:  

 **CONSULATE GENERAL OF GREECE IN BOSTON**

Tuesday, April 22 @ 5pm
10 Akron St. (West), Harvard



Ancient Marathon, Boston Marathon, History, Present and Future: A symposium featuring a global panel of experts reflecting on the Marathon as both an idea and a journey for a peaceful warrior

Hon. Michael Dukakis
Former Governor of Massachusetts - via video message

Dr. Maki Asimakopoulou
General Coordinator, Athens Authentic Marathon - via skype

Mr. Harris Kalofonos
International Relations Consultant for the International Olympic Academy - via skype
Coordinator of Sister cities project between Colorado Springs and Olympia

Mr. Tim Kidduff
Former Race Director of the Boston Marathon - Founder and ED of 26.2 Foundation & International Marathon Center

Mr. Dimitris Kyriakides
Marathon Good Will Ambassador

Dr. Alexis Lyras
Olympism/Humanity Director & Generations for Peace Fellow, Georgetown University
Special Advisor to the International Olympic Academy on Olympism, Peacebuilding and International Development

Mr. Yiannis Papadopoulos
Boston Marathon Champion & Journalist

Foreword and greetings by Mrs. Iphigenia Kanara
Honorable Consul General of Greece in Boston
Nicarated by Constantine Piniopoulos

President-elect of Mass. Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Assistant Director of Fitness at MIT and Community adviser for Wellness at HARVARD GCP

From Marathon to Athens, from Hopkinton to Boston; Phelidpoides, Louis, Kelley, Kyriakides. Come and learn about Victory (or Nike), and the education that derives from the epitome of all athletic struggles, the Marathon, which happens to be one of the most historic sport traditions in Boston. A panel of experts will offer a rich discussion around a variety of issues pertaining to the Marathon, including the legendary athletes, the best of times, last year's events and how sport can be an inspiration, and a vehicle for peacebuilding and humanity.




2014 Harvard University Conference about Kyriakides

Many Exhibitions, Presentations, and other events for Stelios Kyriakides.



THE HELLENIC VOICE **sports** WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2006 Page 11

110th Boston Marathon celebrates 60th anniversary of Stylianos Kyriakides win

By NICK TSIOTOS
Associate Sports Editor

In the aftermath of World War II, seven million people were left destitute in Greece. Greece, which had bitterly resisted Nazi occupation, was being ripped apart by a brutal civil war in 1946. Hundreds of thousands of Greeks starved to death. In the face of disaster, champion marathoner Stylianos Kyriakides took valiant action.

The true story of Kyriakides, who against all odds entered the 1946 golden anniversary Boston Marathon, has been told in all types of media stories including the 2004 Olympic Special. Kyriakides, who had not run in six years, was not running just to win but to make the world aware of the plight of his people. And his run would eventually bring food, clothing and desperately needed medical supplies to Greece.

Although gaunt and ravaged by hunger, Kyriakides pushed his wracked body and his personal mental toughness to the limits. Boston doctors told him to quit. "You will die in the streets," they warned.

Before he started the race, George Demeter handed him a small piece of yellow paper and told him to read the top side which read in Greek a Spartan mother's adage "Ε ταν Ε ΕΠΙ ΤΑΣ." It meant either come with your shield or dead on it. Demeter told him not to read the back until he came to the finish line.

Kyriakides and Johnny Kelley ran stride-for-stride and shoulder-to-shoulder up the famed "heartbreak hill" as they broke away from the other runners. As the two approached Kenmore Square, a little more than a mile from the finish, Kyriakides passed Kelly.

When Kyriakides was running the closing yards he turned over the crumpled piece of paper and looked on the backside that read "Neniki-kamen," "We Are Victorious." These were the words of Pheidippides who had run from Marathon to Athens to announce the news of a Greek victory over the Persians.

As Kyriakides cut through the red twine, victorious hands aloft, he cried out, "For Greece!"

Honoring Greek hero

At St. George Church in Centerville, MA, Ahepa celebrated their annual Ahepa Night February 25 by honoring the memory and historic achievements of Kyriakides. More than 125 people, including Ahepa District Gov. Alex Geourntas, attended the event. The event included a 20-minute presentation of the story of Kyriakides, dinner and music by the Makredes Ensemble. A raffle was held that included the book *Running with Pheidippides* written by myself and Andy Dabulis. The highlight

members George Demeter, Judge Harry Demeter and Harris Booras were instrumental in having Kyriakides sworn in as a member of Boston's Athens Chapter in 1946. Many of Ahepa's older members were present when Kyriakides attended Easter Eve Resurrection midnight service at the Boston Cathedral. They still remember Fr. James Coucouzis saying, "This time we shall light our candle from the candle of the great victor." Church bells rang loudly as Hellenes sang "Christos Anesti."

Greek radio

Ted Demetriades and Peter Cakridas, hosts of *Grecian Echoes*, a radio program in Boston, surprised their listeners with a special guest, Dimitri Kyriakides, son of Stylianos Kyriakides on their April 11 show. Dimitri passionately told his father's story in a one-hour segment in Greek and English.

Statue unveiled

The official unveiling of "The Spirit of the Marathon" statue of Stylianos Kyriakides was held in Hopkinton April 12. Honored guests included his son Dimitri; Jim Davis, New Balance chairman and CEO; Metropolitan Methodios; Tim Kiddiff, Hopkinton Athletic Association president; Mico Kaufman, sculptor; Tom Grik, Boston Athletic Association president; Spyros Zagaris, Marathon Greek councilman and Peter Mezitt of Weston Nurseries. Davis funded the statue, which according to news sources was commissioned for \$230,000. Davis, a philanthropic Greek American, also funded the exact replica that was unveiled at Marathon, Greece prior to the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Inspirational victory

Kyriakides' victory in 1946 inspired many then, as it does today. Among two of the more notable Greek Americans who ran the Boston Marathon were, former governor Michael Dukakis and Winthrop resident John Booras, with Booras eventually winning a Canadian Marathon. The late Telly Savalas constantly told his fans the Kyriakides story. Our youth must learn the story of Kyriakides.

Athens Chapter remembers

Athens Ahepa Chapter 24 President Constantine Calliontzis and Geourntas presented a video presentation of the Kyriakides victory in 1946. It took April 10, 1946. Athens Chapter

Stylian Kyriakides looks at his watch at he crosses the finish line April 19, 1946. He finished with a time of 2:29:27, which at that time, was the fastest time in the world.

Stylian Kyriakides at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Athens, Greece May 23, 1946. More than one million Athenians lined the streets upon his return.

John Booras of Winthrop, MA was inspired by Kyriakides and ran in 75

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONDITIONS OF LONG-DISTANCE RUNNING IN THE 30s and 40s AND THE BOSTON MARATHON ORGANIZATION

It is interesting for the reader to understand the conditions under which the long-distance runners competed at the time in both Europe and USA, to truly appreciate the magnitude of their achievements, compared to the present days. The main issues were the poor condition of the road surface, the insufficient organization of the racing events throughout, especially regarding the supply stations, the lack of intermediate distance markings, the uncontrolled traffic allowing many cars and motorcycles on the route, not much assistance for the runners before and after the race and the quality of clothing, shoes and socks used by the runners. All these things also applied to the Boston marathon.

Most of the Boston course surface was made of cement, a hard surface for the feet, and the edges on both sides of the road were rough and uneven, making the course dangerous, especially at the crowded start of the race. The surface caused ankle sprains, bruises, cramps, and blisters. According to the newspapers of the time, more than half of the Boston marathon runners suffered from blisters and sprains after each race.

Often the runners had to find their own way to the start, where dropping clothing service was almost nonexistent. Doctors examined the runners only last minute before the race. There were no proper water stations along the course, so most of the times it was the spectators that gave water or oranges to the runners, creating obstacles for the competitors. The very few existing water stations were handled poorly.

At the finish line the organizers, the reporters and the VIPs were closing in, leaving little space for the winner to finish, and apart from the winner and the first six runners-up, most other runners did not receive much attention. There were no vehicles to pick up the runners who dropped out, so they had to hitchhike a passing car or take buses from a nearby road to reach the finish, suffering from cramps, bruises, sprains or blisters while having nothing to cover their hot and sweaty bodies. According to the *Globe* in 1938, "*Stelios Kyriakides, the Greek Olympian and a heavy pre-race favorite, dropped out of the race at the twenty-mile mark after running sixth most of the way. Kyriakides developed blisters on his left foot. No cars were available to bring him into the finish, so he hailed a passing bus, the driver of which allowed him to ride free. The bus, however, was not going far enough so Kyriakides dropped off and thumbed a ride from a motorist who brought him to a spot in Boston where a \$1.25 taxi ride brought him into the clubhouse*". That says it all. Fortunately, George Demeter was there to pay the taxi. The reader can imagine Stelios' condition and how he must have felt.

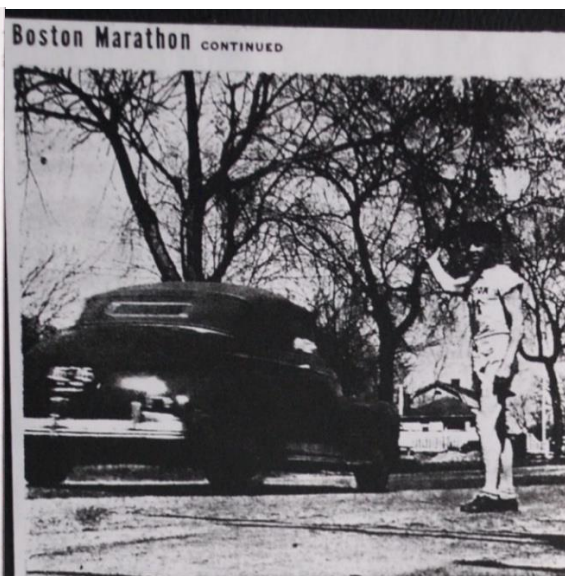
In the BAA history of the marathon book, it says *“Blisters were treated at the BAA dressing room after the race. Most than half of the runners suffered from blisters, sprains and bruises”*. The running shoes of the time were made of hard leather with stitched tops and the soles were made of hard leather about a third of an inch thick. The new shoes had the fronts bending upwards. New shoes had to be used in training for some time to “break” them and make them softer. Once the soles were worn down and developed holes, they had to be taken for repair to a shoe repair shop, same as the ordinary shoes at the time. In the photo you can see Kyriakides’ Boston shoes with partly repaired soles. There was little money to own a second pair of shoes at the time. Many runners ran without socks. There were no special running socks then, so runners used ordinary socks that had stitches and were not soft. Kyriakides run without socks in 1938 and paid the price.

There were also no special running shirts. Runners used ordinary sleeveless tops or T-shirts that caused rashes to the upper parts of their bodies. Shorts were also of poor quality, and the underpants were made of cotton with stitches that caused rushes to the runners’ inner thighs. Until 1946, throughout the Boston marathon route the runners were suffocated by the exhaust fumes emitted by the cars and motorcycles that flooded the racing course. Every official, newspaper reporter and VIP was on a car following the runners along the course. The athletes faced breathing problems and very often had to zigzag to avoid the traffic throughout the course. Johnny Kelley mentions in his bio after one of his 1946 sprints, *“when I looked back it was hard to find Kyriakides, who was wending his way through a maze of official vehicles and seven jockeying press cars that spewed clouds of carbon monoxide everywhere.”*

The book continues to say that *“indeed, both runners were so obscured by the blue, smoky fumes and maneuvering autos that many people lining the streets missed much of the dramatic fight. Disappointed spectators booed and catcalled at the passing convoy”*. As the reader can see from the photos below, the conditions were dreadful to say the least, and yet the runners at that time could finish in times under two and half hours. They were heroes.



BLISTERS were treated in the Boston A.A. dressing room after the race. More than half of the marathon runners suffered blisters, sprains or bruises.

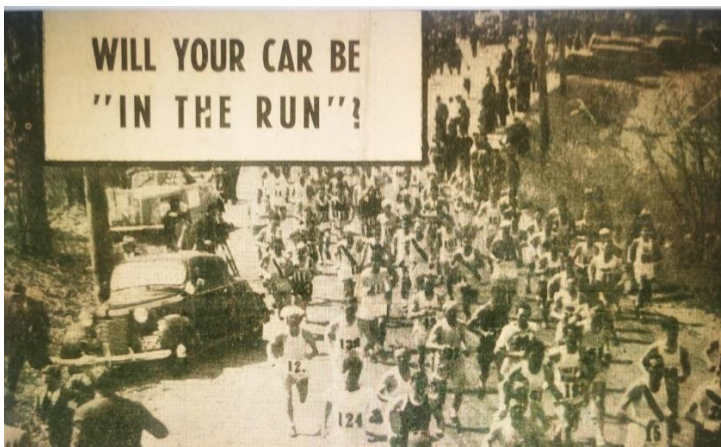
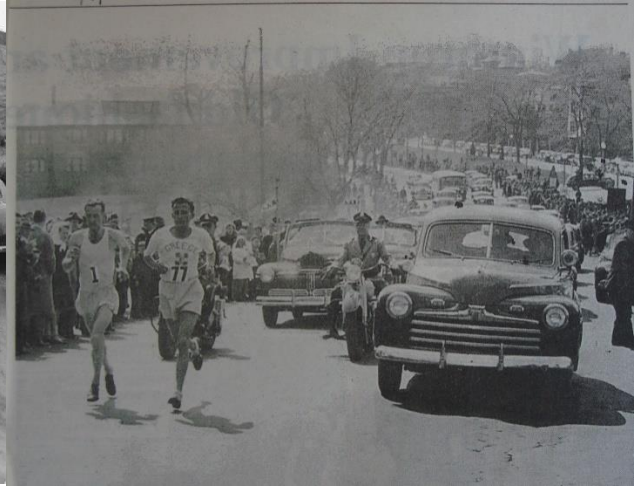


RUNNER HITCHHIKES his way to finish line after dropping out of race with a twisted knee. Of 116 starters only 44 officially finished the marathon.

Stelios Kyriakides, the Greek Olympian and a heavy pre-race favorite, dropped out of the race at the twenty-mile mark after running sixth most of the way. Kyriakides developed blisters on his left foot. No cars were available to bring him into the finish, so he hailed a passing bus, the driver of which allowed him to ride free. The bus, however, was not going far enough so Kyriakides dropped off and thumbed a ride from a motorist who brought him to a spot in Boston where a \$1.25 taxi ride brought him into the clubhouse.



The shoes with repaired soles Kyriakides wore in 1946, in IOC Museum, Cyprus.
In 1946 only 44 out of 116 entries finished.



Many cars and police motorcycles following the runners, choking the runners with blue fumes.



Rough road surfaces in Athens 1937, and on the right the Boston cement roads.

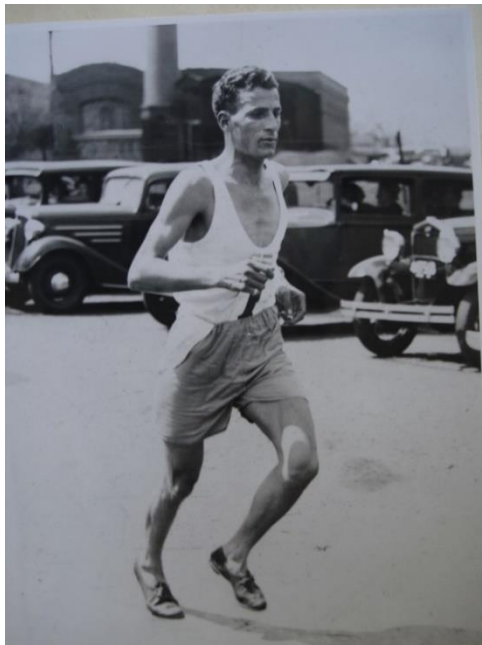
102 Marathoners as They Got Away at Hopkinton



SCENE AT START OF LONG GRIND as Marathon field begins Hopkinton-to-Boston race this noon. (AP Photo Staff Photo by Danny Gottman)



Rough road surfaces in Boston, 1946 and the NY marathon finish in 1976.
Athletes running with no socks



CHAPTER XIV
1987 AND AFTER

MUSEUM OF MARATHON RUN



The “Museum of marathon run” in the city of Marathion.
It opened after I gave most of my father’s memorabilia for display.





Some of the Kyriakides trophies in the front room of the “Museum of marathon run”





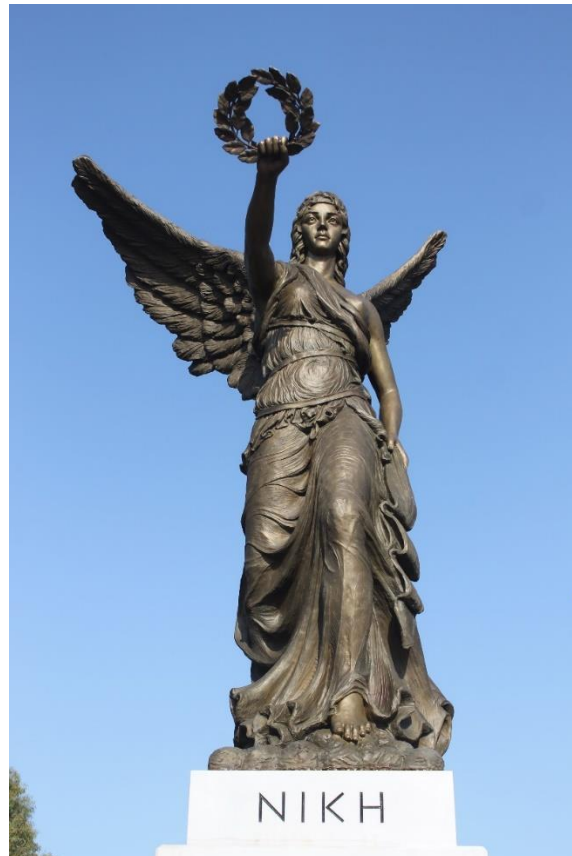
2002 - Part of the Kyriakides memorabilia when I still had them at home.



The Stelios Kyriakides library in the “museum of marathon”, where I gave out books about the history of marathon run



International Olympic Committee offices in Cyprus. The ‘Stelios Kyriakides’ meeting room with a nice painting painted by my friend Niki Prokou



The statue of NIKH (NIKE), the goddess of Victory and the start of Athens marathon

KYRIAKIDES EXHIBITS IN OTHER MUSEUMS

Kyriakides memorabilia can be found in the:

“Boston Sports museum”, Boston

“Marathon run museum”, in the city of Marathon, where the Kyriakides memorabilia is the main exhibit.

The “Berlin marathon museum”, two newspapers of 1936 and 1946

The “Cyprus Olympic Committee Museum”, Nicosia

The Museums in the villages of Statos, Cyprus and Pyrgos, Greece

The Museum of the “Olympia” Athletic Club, Limassol, Cyprus

STATUES



In Hopkinton 2006, in Marathon 2004, in Filothei 1998 and in Statos 2010,
and on the top right, Dimitris Kyriakides with Tim Kilduff.



MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Memorial plaques. Similar marble plaques can be found in Pyrgos, Peloponnese, In Filothei, Greece and in Paphos Cyprus, all unveiled in 2017.



WINNERS WREATHS



CONTINUING THE TRADITION



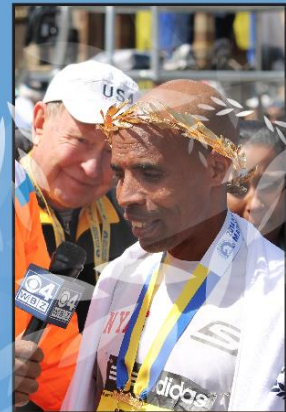
TATYANA MCFADDEN, USA
2015 - 1:52:54



LELISA DESISA, ETHIOPIA
2015 - 2:09:17



CAROLINE ROTICH, KENYA
2015 - 2:24:55



MEBRAHTOM 'MEB' KEFLEZIGHI, USA
2014 - 2:08:37

Winners wearing Gold Wreaths in Boston and Marine Corps marathons given by Dimitri Kyriakides and the 26.2 Foundation, in memory of Stylianos Kyriakides



Delivering the Wreaths for the Marine Corps Marathon
at the Greek Embassy in DC.



This photo is from the 2010 Zheng-Kai marathon in China,
I uploaded this photo on the web under the title,
“THE SPIRIT OF MARATHON”

CHAPTER XV

NOTEWORTHY EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Boston 1946 – Winner in 2:29:27

Best time in the world in 1946, setting a European and Greek national record

First long-distance runner in the world:

1. To train with his coach by correspondence in 1934-35-36 and 1945-46 (between Greece and Cyprus)
2. To use a wrist stopwatch to monitor his pace- 1934.
3. To use stretching exercises before and after the race - 1935.
4. To follow a strict diet- 1935.
5. To run for “charity” (for Greece) - Boston 1946
6. To run for “a special cause” - Boston 1947 (To collect money and athletic equipment so that the Greek team can take part in the 1948 London Olympics).
7. First non-American or Canadian to win Boston.
8. To be featured in an American comic book

No 7 – His lucky number:

He was 1.72 tall, Won Boston wearing bib 77, his time was 2:29:27, died at the age of 77 in 1987, 1946 was the 7th time that Boston was held on the 19th instead of the usual 20th of April, won on a Saturday the 7th day of the week, and he was the 35th individual winner (5x7=35)

LIST OF HONORS

- THE GOLD CROSS OF THE PHOENIX by the King of Greece in 1960 for his services to the country.

- Awards from CITIES: cities that have awarded him with their highest honor, Boston, Athens, Piraeus, Nea Smirni, Paleo Faliro, Nikea, Patra, Limassol, Pafos, Filothei, Republic of Cyprus, and others

- ORGANIZATIONS: Greek Senate - Greek Athletic Federation, SEGAS - Greek ministry of defense - Army Academy - Greek Ministry of Education - Greek Scouts

- From all the Athletic clubs of Greece and Cyprus

- The Rotary clubs of Athens, Nikea and Limassol
- Many private Organizations, in Greece and Cyprus
- The Greek and Cypriot Olympic committees
- The King of Greece twice in 1960
- President of Republic of Greece and Cyprus
- Greek and Cypriot Athletic Federations
- The GUINNESS BOOK OF MARATHONS – speaks about Kyriakides marathon achievements in three places.

ATHLETIC ACHIVEMENTS

He won in the PAN-CYPRIAN Games, the 1500 meters, the 5K, the 10K, the 20K several times.

He won the GREEK National Championship 12 times:

The 5K in 1934 in 16'12", in 1936 in 15'45", in 1937 in 15'35", in 1938 in 15'46.5",

The 10K in 1934 in 32'53.6", in 1936 in 32'52.04", in 1937 in 32'52"

The marathon in 1933 in 3.06'05", in 1934 in 2.49'42", in 1936 in 3.06'30", in 1937 in 2h57'22" and in 1939 in 2h52'07".

He was the BALKAN Champion:

In the 10K, he won 1st place twice: in 1934, in 33'49.2", in 1936, in 33'05.8", and

Four times in the marathon in 1934 in 2h49'42", in 1936 in 2h49'10", in 1937 in 2h57'22" and in 1939 in 2h52'07".

He was 2nd in the 10K in 1937 in 32'06.5" and in the marathon in 1933 in 3h03'05", and in 1938 in 2.31'30".

He was 3rd in the 10K in 1939 in 33'50"8 and the marathon in 1940 in 2h46'43".

In the BRITISH AAA championship, he was 2nd twice in the marathon in 1935 in 3h03'20" and in 1937 in 2h40'06".

BOSTON marathon:

In 1938 he dropped out on mile 20-21 suffering from severe blisters due to the hard cement surface of the road, in combination with wearing new, unbroken shoes without socks.

In 1946 he won in 2h29'27", setting a European record, this also being the best time in the world for that year, in addition to finishing 5th in the 10-mile Cathedral race in Boston in 51'40".

In 1947 he finished 10th in 2h39'13" and in the 10-mile Cathedral race he finished 4th.

EUROPEAN games in Oslo 1946:

He dropped out with severe cramps, on the 20K

OLYMPIC games:

In Berlin, 1936 he finished 11th in 2h43'20" and in

London, 1948 he finished 18th in 2h49'00"

He broke the national GREEK and CYPRIOT records several times in the 1500m, 5K, 10K, 20K, 3 and 5 miles, one hour and the marathon.

He held the BALKAN Games records in the 10K and the marathon.

In 1946, he broke the EUROPEAN record in the marathon, finishing in 2h29'27".

In 1946, he had the BEST TIME in the world in the marathon, with 2h29'27"

He held the National GREEK marathon record for 34 years and 6 months, which still is a world longest, according to the GUINNESS book of marathon.

DOCUMENTARIES and TV SPECIALS

1946 – By PATHE NEWS

1979 – For ET1 – ALATI KAI PIPERI – by Freddy Germanos.

1981 – For Greek ETI - PROTI SELIDA by Freddy Germanos.

1985 – For RIK, Cyprus

1987 – For ET1, Greece

2001 – In BOSTON for book presentation

2003 – For ET3 - TRUE STORIES

2003 – For Greek ETI INTERNATIONAL channel

2004 – For NBC “STYLIANOS KYRIAKIDES THE JOURNEY OF A WARRIOR” –
EMMY AWARD 2004

2009 – For ET1 - THE GREEKS

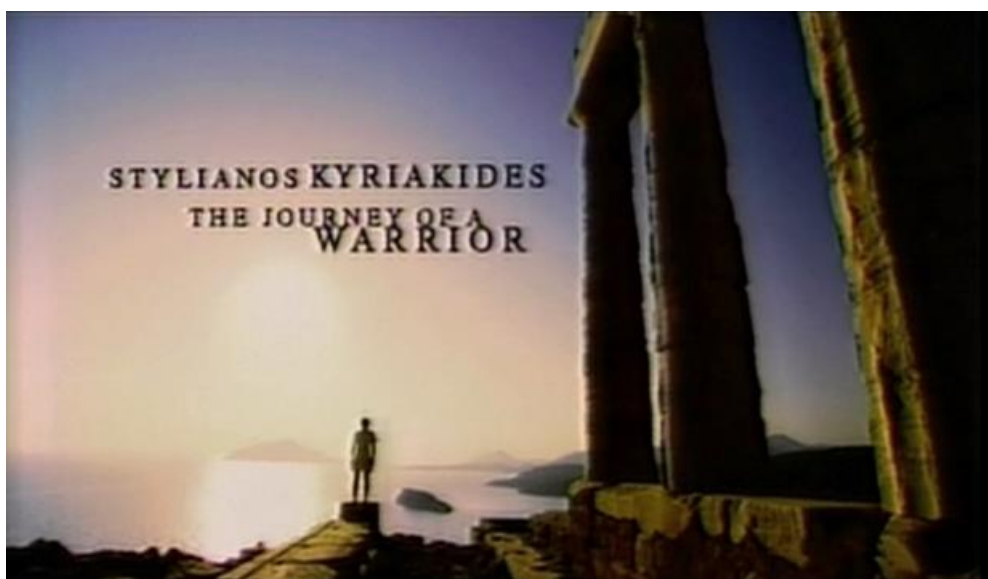
2012 – FOR USA TV – NOW IS THE TIME by Meri Crouley.

2015 – For RIK, Cyprus

2017 – For KOA, Cyprus

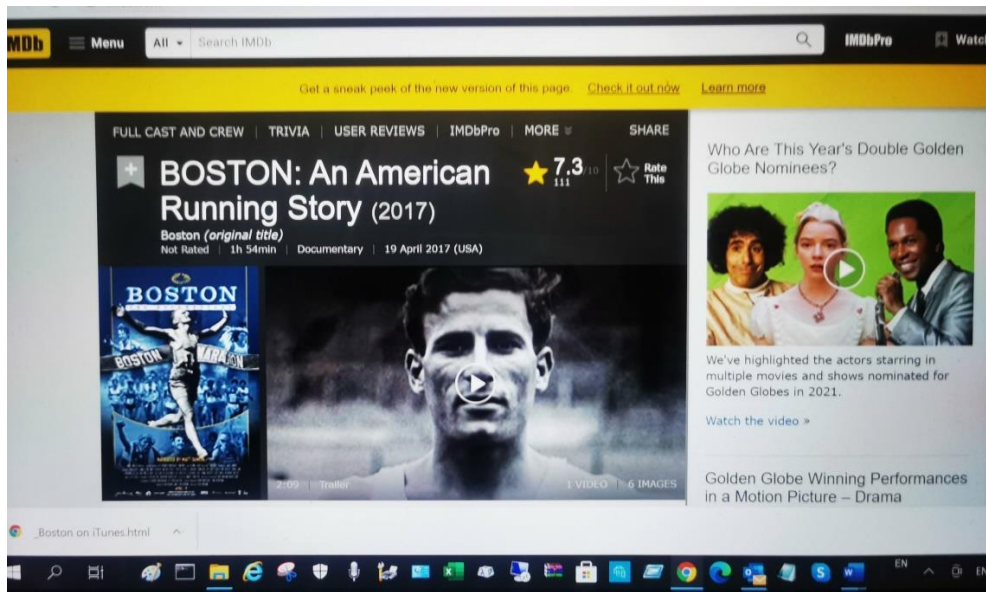
2017 – BOSTON the documentary, by Joh Dunham

Much more information and footage can be found on the web and YouTube.



The 2004 NBC documentary and the documentary about Boston, which aired in 2017.

There are several TV programs on the web as well.



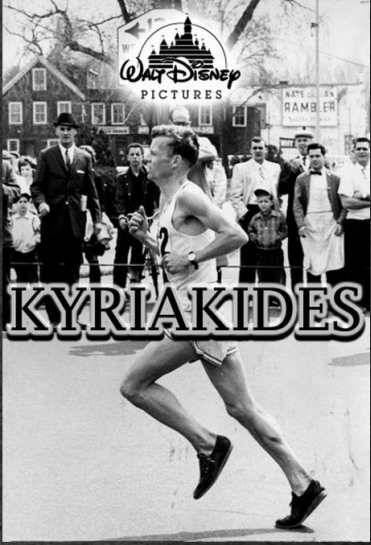
FILMS

The “Kyriakides” story, film production by 1821 Media, Mayhem pictures and DISNEY.

KYRIAKIDES

A sports drama about the life of greek marathon runner Stylianos Kyriakides during the Nazi occupation of his country and his determination to win the Boston Marathon.

A Co-production with Mayhem Pictures. The project is currently set up with Disney, with writer Bill Wheeler attached.



2012 – NOW IS THE TIME, MeryCrouley

2020 - RUNNERS WORLD magazine

2021 – The official GREEK government documentary about the last 200 years of Greek history.

MEDALS

The medals of four races have the Kyriakides' face: the Paphos marathon, the Limassol marathon, Kyriakidia in Filothei and the 7.7K in Pyrgos.



BOOKS and PUBLICATIONS

2001 – “RUNNING WITH PHEIDIPPIDES” – Nick Tsiotos and Andy Dabilis.
Syracuse University Press

2003 – “ΓΕΝΝΗΜΕΝΟΣ ΝΙΚΗΤΗΣ” – The translation in Greek

2007 – Limassol, Cyprus. Memorial album for the 30 years from his death

2014 – “MARATHON SPIRIT” – In China, in Chinese

2014 – “STELIOS KYRIAKIDES” – Children’s book in Greek

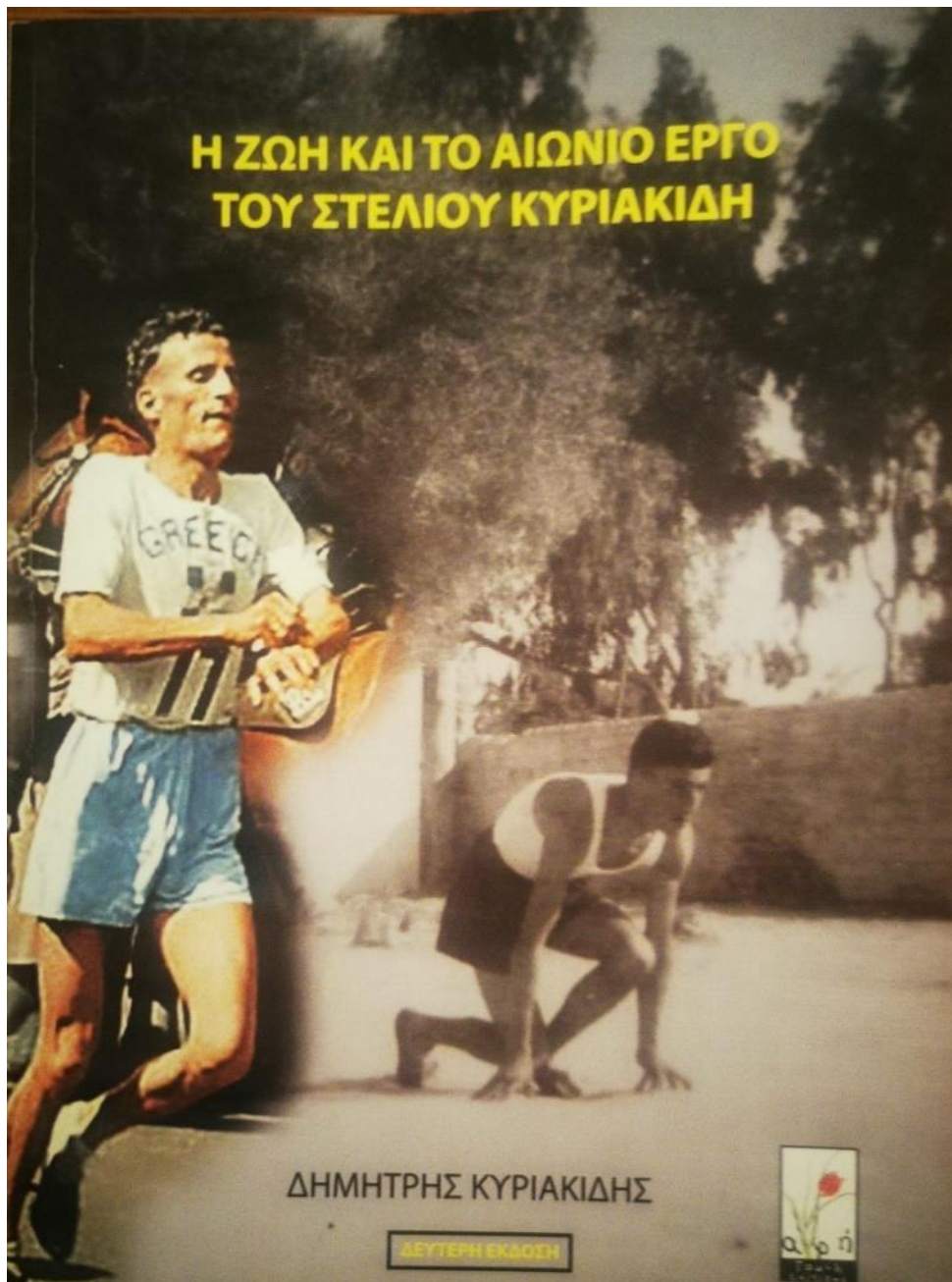
2014 and 2018 – Short BIO in English, Greek and Chinese by Dimitri Kyriakides.

2017 – 2 Small books by the Cyprus Federation and SK Paphos running club.

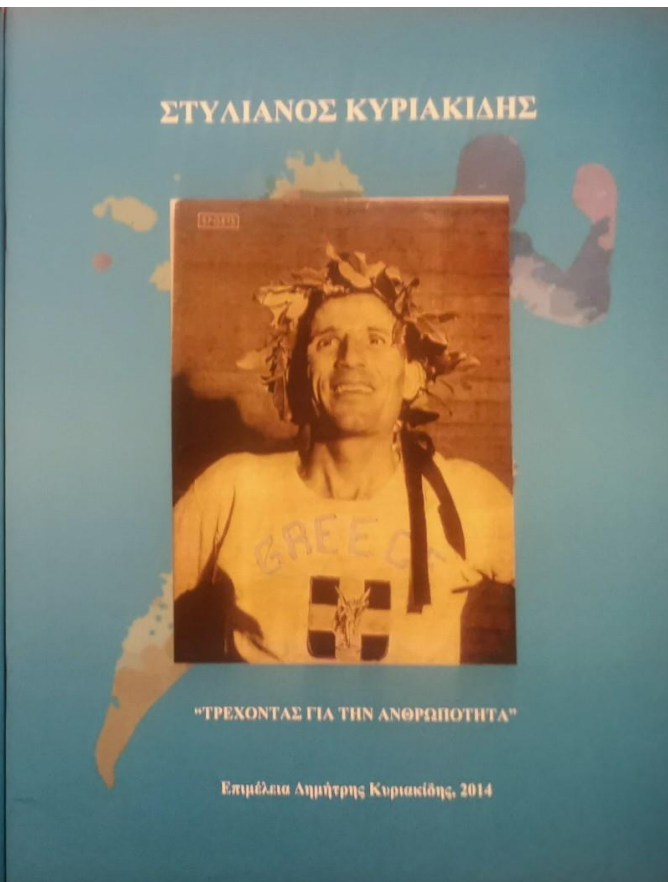
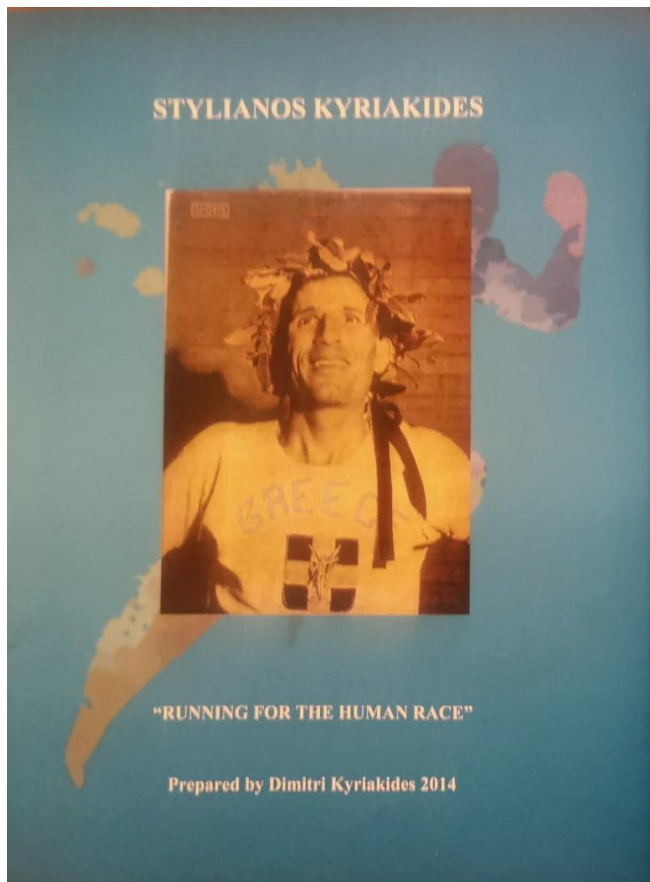
2019 – “THE LIFE AND THE ETERNAL WORK OF STELIOS KYRIAKES” in
Greek, by Dimitri Kyriakides.

“Η ΖΩΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΑΙΩΝΙΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΤΟΥ ΣΤΕΛΙΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΙΔΗ” – Written by Dimitri
Kyriakides

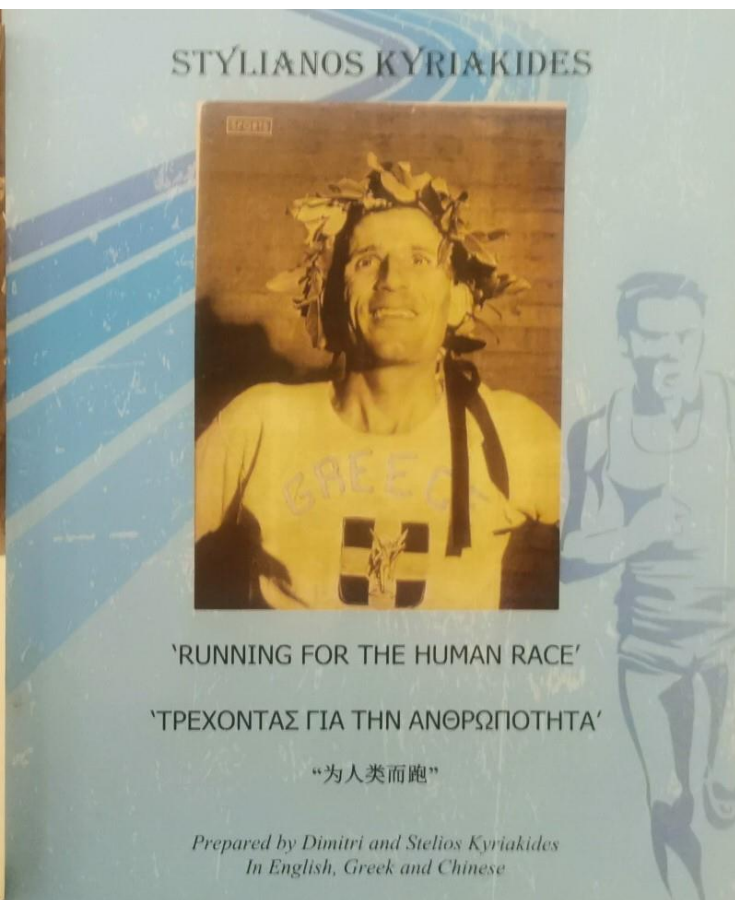
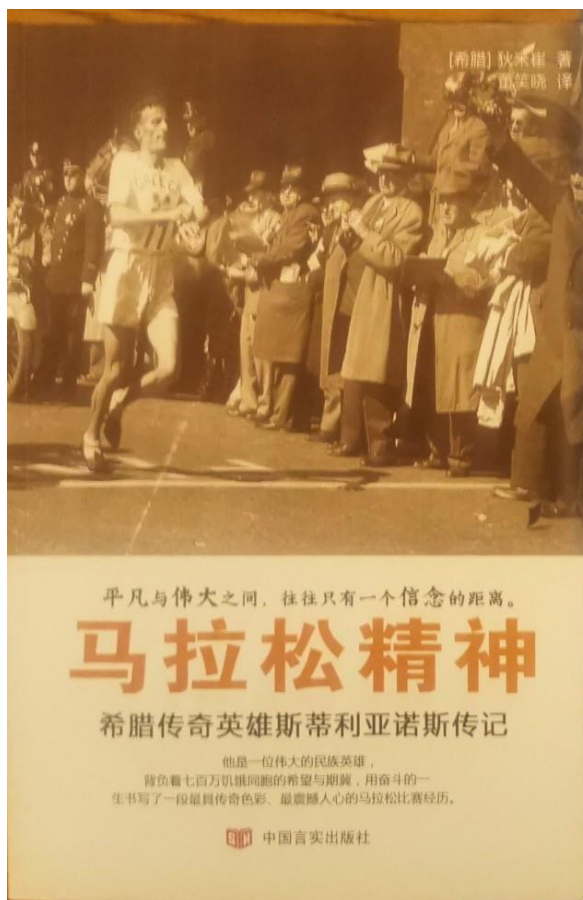
2021 - “THE LIFE AND THE ETERNAL WORK OF STELIOS KYRIAKIDES” in
English, by the Dimitri Kyriakides family.



2019- the Greek book

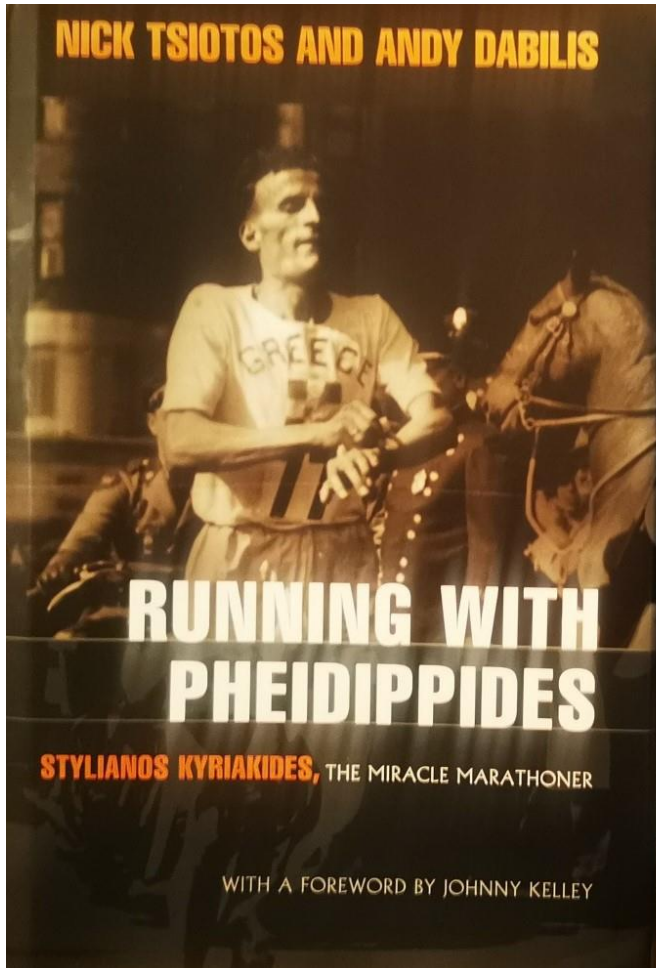


2014

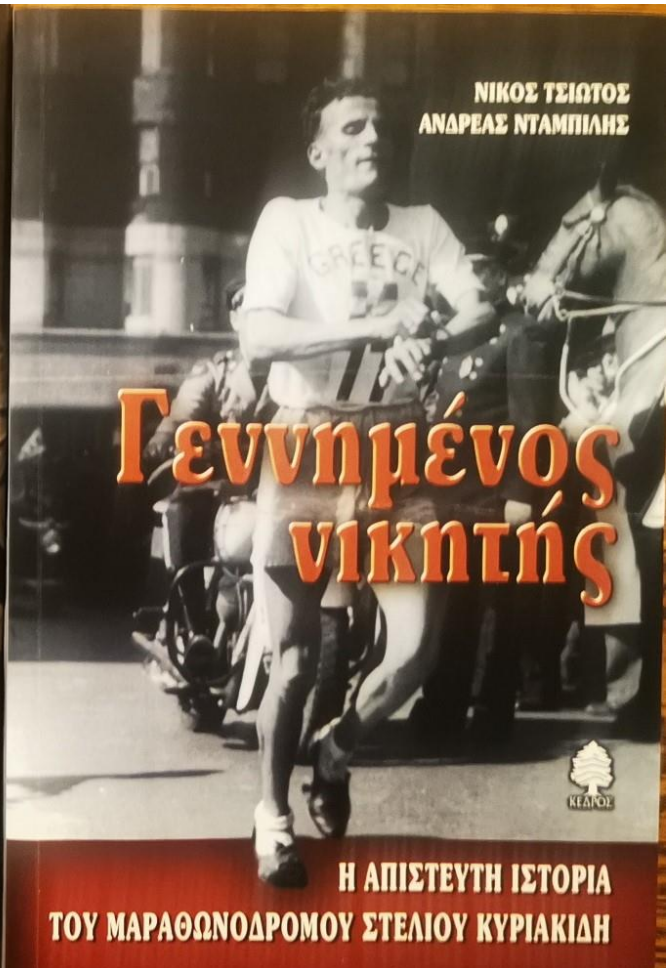


2014

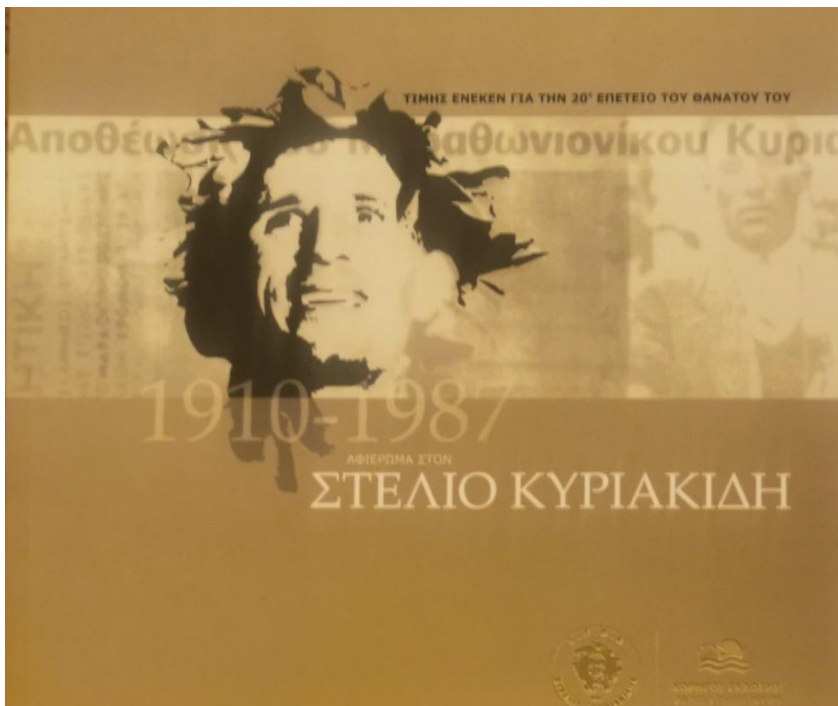
2018



2001



2003



2007



2017

ARTICLES in magazines

In the 2000 publication of Century of Boston Sports, there is reference to Kyriakides in a two-page article (pp. 117-118), “Win or die”. In fact, the author of the book Richard A. Johnson, the curator of the BOSTON SPORTS MUSEUM, came to Greece twice to organize big exhibits in the Deere and the Anatolia American colleges.

There are numerous of articles that have been and are being written in magazines and newspapers all over the world and the internet is full of information in English, Greek, Chinese, Spanish, Italian and German.

POEMS and SKETCHES

Since 1946 more than 40 poems and sketches have been dedicated to Kyriakides.

EXHIBITIONS

Many exhibitions for Kyriakides had been organized in Boston, in South Africa, in many cities in Cyprus, in China, and in Greece.

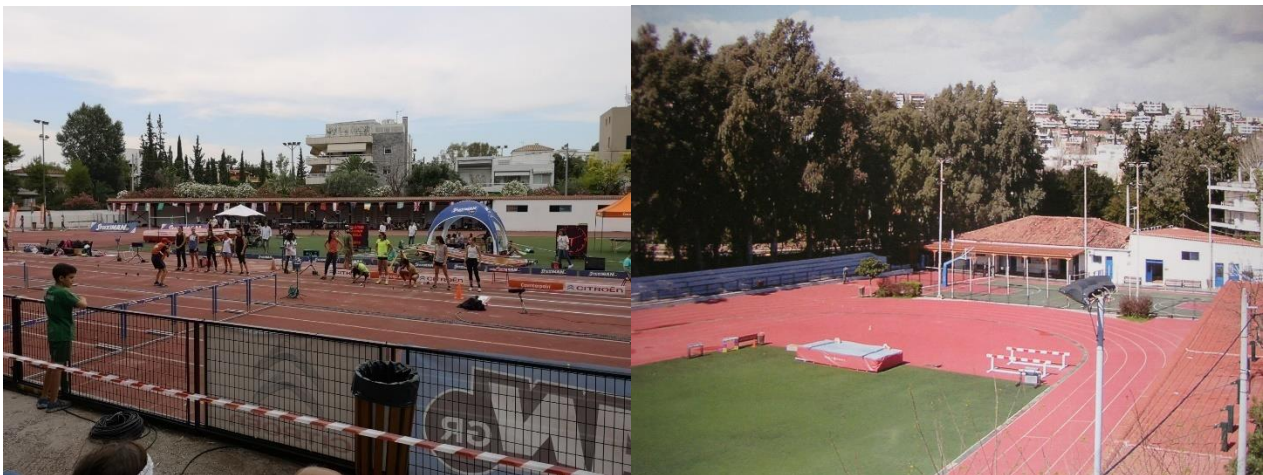
Typical exhibition at Deree College in2003



STADIUMS WITH HIS NAME



The main stadium in Paphos, Cyprus



The Filothei stadium during the Annual International Women's Gala of 5 events



1953 - The Filothei stadium under construction

STYLIANOS (STELIOS) KYRIAKIDES – ATHLETIC RECORD

Below are the most important races Kyriakides run.

(There are several other international and many local races

that we cannot find records of)

Date	Event	Distance	time	Plac e	Remark
1932, Limassol					In a medical checkup Dr Cheverton told him he could be a good long-distance runner
1932	Pan Cyprian games				Postponed for 1933
1933, 9 April	Γ.Σ.Ο				Games to decide the team members for the Pan Cyprian games. SK did not participate. No results available
1933, 20-23 April	Pan Cyprian games	10000 m	37'26.0"	1 st	
	Ditto	5000 m	17"28.0"	1 st	
1933, 23-24 Sept.	Athens Pre-Balkan games	10000 m	34'34.4"	2 nd	Cyprus sends 3 athletes to take part in the Pre Balkan games
1933, 8 Oct.	Athens national and Balkan games	marathon	3.03'05" Only 24 secs behind winner	1 st or 2 nd	Hot day. 1 st for Greek championship and 2 nd for Balkan games. A spectator threw cold water on him and he froze.
1934, March 11	First Pan Pafian games In 3 days	400 m	59.8"	1st	In Paphos - SK running for the first time for the Statos team, <u>four wins in three days</u>
	Ditto	800 m	2'11.0"	1st	In Paphos
	Ditto	1500 m	4'52.0"	1st	In Geroskipou
	Ditto	5000 m	17'30.0"	1st	In Statos
1934, 5 April	Γ.Σ.Ο. games	5000 m	16'44.5"	1 st	Limassol, Cypriot record
1934, 4-23 April	Cyprus	-----	-----	-----	Otto Simitzek visits Cyprus to train and select athletes
	Ditto	5000 m 3rd day	16'20.4"	1st	Cyprus record
	Ditto	1500 m	4'21.4"	1st	

		4 th day			
1934, 12 May					SK and other Cypriot athletes travel to Greece by boat for the national games
1934, 25-28 May	Greek national games	5000 m	16'12.0"	1 st	Athens
	Ditto	10000 m	34'53.6"	1 st	
1934, 8-15 Oct.	Balkan games, Zagreb	marathon	2.49'42"	1 st	Greek record
	Ditto	10000 m	33'49.2"	1 st	
1934 October	Greece – Hungary	30000 m	1h56'35"	1 st	He won against the famous Kalambus
1934 9 Nov.	Greece Volos	1500 m	4'30.3"	1 st	
1935, 25 March	Greece local run	20000 m	1h10'22"	1 st	Greek record
1935, 2-5 May	Pan Cyprian games, Nicosia	10000 m 1 st day	35'25.0"	1 st	<u>Three wins in four days and a 2nd place</u>
	Ditto	5000 m 2 nd day	16'02"	1 st	Cyprus record
	Ditto	1500 m 3 rd day	4'17.8"	2 nd	
	Ditto	20000 m 4 th day	1.08'06"	1 st	
1935, 12-13 May	London AAA championship	marathon	3.3'20"	2 nd	Only 4 of 39 runners finished, high humidity.
1935, June	Pan-Hellenic games	5000 m	15'45"	1 st	<u>Three wins in four days</u> Greek record
	Ditto	10000 m	32'52.4"	1 st	Greek record
	Ditto	Marathon	3.06'30"	1 st	
1935, 1-2 Sept.	Amiantos games	1 mile		1 st	English army runners also participated
		5000 m	15'31.5"	1 st	Greek record
1935, 20 Sept	Pre Balkan games	10000 m	32'28"	1 st	Greek record
1935, 26 May	Balkan games Athens	marathon	3.08'07"	2 nd	SK was not allowed to run so he started 2 minutes behind but finished just 27 secs behind winner.

1935, November	Greece	One hour	17430 m	1 st	Greek record
	Greece National games	marathon	3.06'03"	1 st	
1936, 1-16 Aug.	Olympic games, Berlin		2.43'20"	11 th	
1936, 20 Sept.	Athens	10000 m	32'28.0"	1 st	
1936, 7 June	Athens national championship	marathon	3.06'30"	1 st	<u>Three wins in four days</u>
	Ditto	10000 m	32'52.4"	1 st	
	Ditto	5000 m	15'45.0"	1 st	
1936, 6 Oct.	Athens, Balkan games	marathon	2.49'10"	1 st	
	Ditto	10000 m	33'05.8"		
1937, 4-11 May	Greek national games	5000 m	15'35.0"	1 st	<u>Two wins in four days and a 4th place</u> Greek record
	Ditto	10000 m	32'52.0"	1 st	
	Ditto	1500 m	4'15.6"	4 th	
1937, 17 th July	London AAA championship	marathon	2.40'20.0"	2 nd	Greek record
1937, 5-12 Sept.	Balkan games	10000 m	33'06".02	2 nd	Bucharest
	ditto	marathon	2.49'10"	1 st	
1938, 19 April	Boston	marathon	-----	----- -	Dropped out because of blisters on mile 21
1938, 26 June	Athens national championship	5000 m	15'46.5"	1 st	
	ditto	10000 m	32'56.5"	1 st	
1938, 8 Sept.	Balkan games	marathon	2.32'20"	2 nd	Belgrade - short distance Ragazoswon in 2.30'38"
1939, 12-15 April	Pan Cyprian games Limassol	10000 m 1 st day	32'45.1"	1 st	<u>Four wins in four days</u> Cyprus record
	Ditto	1500 m 2 nd day	4'19.9"	1 st	
	Ditto	5000 m 3 rd day	15'57.1"	1 st	Cyprus record
	Ditto	20000 m 4 th day	1.11'15.0"	1 st	

1939, 18 July	Internal games Athens	5000 m	15'42.8"	1 st	
1939, 8 Oct.	Athens	marathon	2.52'.07"	1 st	Balkan games
	Ditto	10000 m	33'50.8"	3 rd	Balkan games
1939	Athens national championship	10000 m	33'59.0"	2 nd	<u>Two wins in three days</u>
	Ditto	5000 m	16'11.1"	2 nd	
	Ditto	10000 m	32'51.4"	2 nd	Cross country
1940, Istanbul	Balkan games	Marathon	2.46'43"	3 rd	That race was after his wife's death.
1945 11-13 May	Pan Cyprian games	10000 m	34'58.2"	1 st	Had not trained or ran in five years
	Ditto	5000 m	16'46"	1 st	
1946, 6 or 13 April	Boston	Cathedral 10 miles handicap	51'40"	5 th	This was a training run for SK to see where he stands. He had set a time of 53'
1946, 19 April	Boston	marathon	2.29'27"	1 st	Greek and European record, best time in the world that year.
1946, 22-25 Aug.	Oslo, European games	marathon	----- -	----- -	Dropped out because of severe cramps
1947, 20 April	Boston	Cathedral 10 miles handicap			???????
1947, 20 April	Boston	marathon	2.39.13"	10 th	181 entries
1948, 29 July – 14 Aug.	London Olympic games	marathon	2.49'00"	18 th	41 starters-30 finished because of high humidity
1948, Sept.					Stopped active Athletic career
1950, Feb.					Became member of SEGAS until his death in 1987
1956, July					Opened Filothei track and athletic club

Stelios Kyriakides, started running in 1931 and started training seriously in 1932 in Limassol.

Won the PAN-CYPRIAN games in 1500m, 5K, 10K and 20K many times.

Won the GREEK National Championship 12 times.

In 5K – 4 times, 1934 in 16'12.0", 1936 in 15'45.0", 1937 in 15'35.0", 1938 in 15'46.5".

In 10K – 3 times, 1934 in 32'53.6", 1936 in 32'52.4", 1937 in 32'52.0".

The marathon – 4 times, 1933 in 3h06'05", 1934 in 2h49'42", 1936 in 3h06'30" and 1939 in 2h52'07".

BALKAN Champion.

In 10K - 1934 in 33'49.2" and 1936 in 33'05.8".

In marathon - 1934 in 2h49'42", 1936 in 2h49'10", 1937 in 2h57'22", and 1939 in 2h52'07".

Was 2nd in 10K - 1937 in 32'06.5", and marathon 1933 in 3h03'05", and 1938 in 2h31'30".

Was 3rd in the 10K - 1939 in 33'50.8" and the marathon – 1940 in 2h46'43".

The BRITISH AAA championship.

Two times 2nd place in the marathon – in 1935 3h03'20" and in 1937 in 2h40'06".

BOSTON marathon.

In 1938 he drops out on mile 21 suffering from severe blisters caused by the hard cement surface of the road, in combination with wearing new unbroken shoes without socks.

In 1946 he won in 2h29'27" which was a European record and the best time in the world for 1946.

In 1947 he finished 10th in 2h39'13'

In the CATHEDRAL 10-mile handicap race in Boston.

In 1946 - 5th in 51'40", and

In 1947 - 4th

EUROPEAN games in Oslo 1946- dropped out because of severe cramps.

OLYMPIC Games.

In 1936 in Berlin – he finished 11th in 2h43'20".

In 1948 in London – he finished 18th in 2h49'00".

He broke the National Greek and Cypriot records several times, in 1500, 5K, 10K, 20K, 3 and 5 miles, one hour and the marathon.

Broke the Balkan records in the 10K and the marathon.

Broke the European record in marathon, in Boston 1946.

Best time in the world in marathon in the year 1946.

Holder of the Greek national marathon record for 34 years and 6 months.

THE MEMBERS OF THE GREEK "DREAM TEAM" OF THE 30s.

Sprints - Frangoudis and Sakelariou and Miss Lanitou,

400-800m - Georgakopoulos, Misailidis, Mantikas, Pasi, Tsoukalas

1500m - Georgakopoulos, Verkopoulos, Arvanitis

5K – 10K - Kyriakides, Arvanitis, Nanos, Ragazos, Vartzakis, Kousidis, Tsoustas, Blachos, Bekiaris

Marathon - Kyriakides, Ragazos, Arvanitis, Vartzakis, Kousidis, Tsiponis, Tsamis

Hurdles - Mantikas, Skiadas, Miropoulos

Jumps - Labrakis, Nafpliotis, Palamiotis, Paterakis, Simeonidis

Javelin - Papageorgiou

High jump - Paterakis

Pole vault - Thanou, Lekatsas, Travlos

Shot put and Discus - Silas, Stefanakis, Tomaras

The “dream team” of the Greek National track and Field of the 30s. Kyriakides standing forth from the left. The team members were like a family.



Receiving the first light at the Boston Cathedral from Rev. Coucouzes and the actual candle in the museum in Marathon.



Arriving in Athens. The reception at the Athens airport by the air force



Coming down from the plane, Iphigenia is there to greet him.



Marathon Victor Honored in Athens

ATHENS, May 23 (AP)—A tumultuous crowd of Greek Air Force pilots carried 36-year old Stylianos Kyriakides, winner of the Boston marathon, from his plane when the runner arrived at Hissani from America today. Kyriakides' coach said he would start training immediately for the forthcoming marathon at Oslo, Norway.



Upon his return to Athens there are nearly 1 million people waiting to greet him.





Stelios Kyriakides' grave in the beautiful mountain village of Pyrgos, where Dimitrihas a holiday house. Pyrgos is 1.5 hours' drive from Athens.



Every year in May a 7.7K race is organized with the runners paying their respects before the race.

PAUL EDWARD (JERRY) NASON - BOSTON GLOBE SPORTS EDITOR.

Born April 14, 1909 Died June 19, 1986,

Friend of Kyriakides, also died at the age of 77

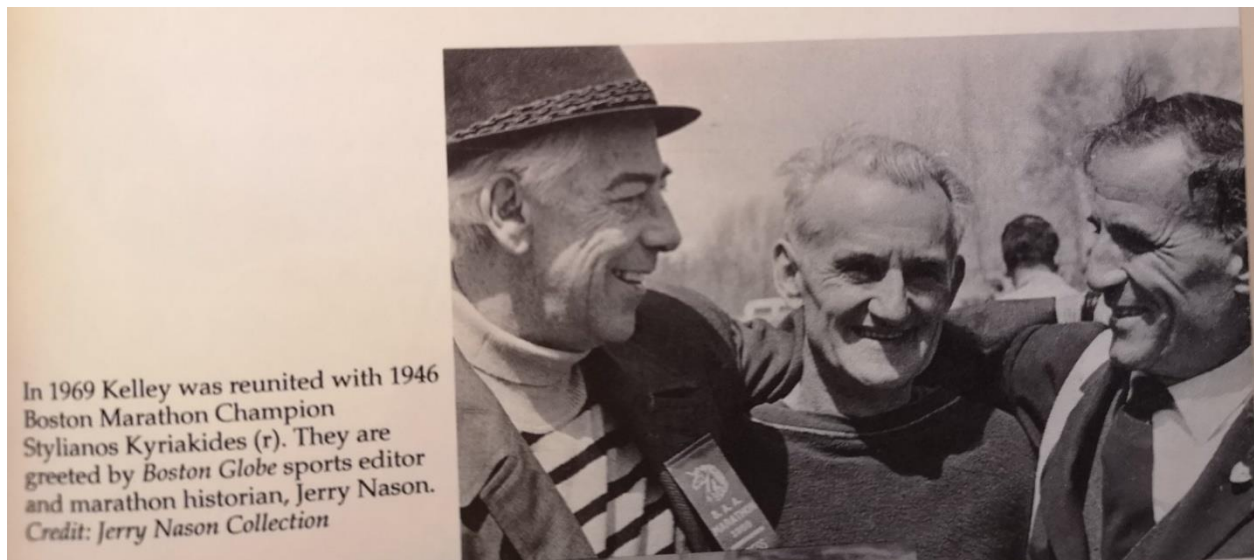
The late Boston Globe sports editor Jerry Nason, the person responsible for documenting most of the written history of the Boston Marathon, called the 1946 contest “the most significant race of all time. Running to dramatize the plight of his starving countrymen, Greek marathoner Stylianos Kyriakides hung gallantly onto Johnny Kelley and ran him down in the late stages of the race to win in a time of 2:29:27. The race was also significant because it heralded the dominance of international runners in future years”. This was the final year that the large contingent of race vehicles was allowed on the course. In 1947, B.A.A. president Walter Brown would allow only three press buses along the route.

- 1. Stylianos Kyriakides (GRE) 2:29:27*
- 2. John A. Kelley (MA) 2:31:27*
- 3. Gerard A. Cote (CAN) 2:36:34*
- 4. Louis P. Gregory (NY) 2:37:23*
- 5. Ab Morton (CAN) 2:38:54*
- 6. John Kersnason (NY) 2:41:20*
- 7. Lloyd Evans (CAN) 2:43:02*
- 8. Charles A. Robbins, Jr. (NY) 2:43:59*
- 9. Theodore J. Vogel (MA). 2:44:24*
- 10. Louis Young (MA) 2:44:38*

Jerry Nason was the sports editor for the Boston Globe from 1942 to 1975. His greatest claim to fame was writing the lead story in the Globe for fifty consecutive Boston Marathons.

Nason was the first sportswriter to take up the cause of Addie Joss to get him elected to the Hall of Fame. He is also a member of the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

1969, the three “amigos” meet again. Jerry Nason, Johnny Kelley, Stylianos Kyriakides



TIM KILDUFF



Tim Kilduff at the start of Athens marathon. The stone is the original stone from 1896 indicating that the distance of the first Olympic marathon was 40K. A replica was sent to Hopkinton in 2015.

Writing this book, I thought that I must have a special section for a special person, who I consider my American “brother”, to account for the many things we have done together, over the past 16 years related to the two important passions that we share in life, our passion for the sport of marathon running and our dedication to promoting the legacy of Stylianos Kyriakides and the aspiration to benefit our society.

I consider Tim to be a special person, a visionary and a doer and I feel lucky to have met him for the first time during my father’s Hopkinton statue unveiling in April 2006. Ever since that day we have achieved many important things in Greece, Cyprus, China and the USA. It is interesting to note in brief some of the life achievements of Tim.

BOSTON MARATHON ACTIVITIES

The following represents a 30+-year relationship with what is arguably the greatest Marathon in the world. Involvement included a leadership position when the event's continuation was in jeopardy. After the event was stabilized, participation continued in a number of creative ways including broadcasting, fundraising, and non-profit development with each effort enhancing the Boston Marathon.

Chairman of the Hopkinton Marathon Committee, 1980 – 82

Appointed to the Town of Hopkinton's first committee and served as Chair from 1980 – 82. The purpose of the committee was to work with organizers of the Boston Marathon and to "protect" the interests of Hopkinton.

Boston Athletic Association, 1982 – Present

Nominated for membership in the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) the non-profit organization that has been producing the Boston Marathon since 1897. Served on the Board of Governors from 1982 – 84.

Race Director, Boston Marathon, 1983 – 84

Served as Chair (Race Director) of the BAA Boston Marathon Committee in 1983 and '84 for this international event. Duties included race management, media relations, sponsorship development, community outreach, and volunteer support.

Runner's World Magazine, 1983

Listed in the Runner's World All-Star Team made up of people who made a substantial contribution to the sport of running. The magazine has a circulation of 500,000 plus.

Boston Marathon Finisher, 1985

Ran and completed the Boston Marathon.

The Adaptive Environments Center, 1986

Awarded a Best of Accessible Boston Citation for making the Boston Marathon accessible to wheelchair racers.

Marathon Race SpotWatch, 1986 – Present

Co-created and continues to manage a consulting practice providing local and national media outlets with hands-on support for their broadcasts of marathons. Race SpotWatch has undertaken the TV coverage of over 40 marathons.

One successful technique pioneered by Race SpotWatch is a "spotters' network" which places volunteers, trained by Race SpotWatch, at mile markers along the course. The spotters become the "eyes and ears" delivering accurate and timely information to the on-air talent.

Boston Globe Top 100, 1998

As part of the Boston Marathon's 100th Anniversary was named by the Boston Globe as one of the event's most influential contributors.

Hopkinton Athletic Association

Founded this non-profit organization to raise funds to improve athletic and recreational programs and facilities in the Town of Hopkinton. Negotiated a unique licensing agreement with the BAA, which was the basis of a fund-raising effort in conjunction with the BAA's 100th Marathon that generated over \$300,000. The HAA was created with the support of Guy Morse, Executive Director of the Boston Athletic Association.

CBS 4 TV, 1987 – Present

Reporter/Commentator for Boston Marathon, as part of CBS 4 TV's live coverage, providing on-air reports of the men's race from on-course lead vehicle.

Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, 2000 – 01

Member of the SportSmarts Advisory Committee that helped launch "Testing the Limits", an initiative to teach science through sports. The first-of- a-kind programming used the backdrop of the Boston Marathon to air science vignettes on television prior to and during the Boston Marathon. CBS4 TV earned an Associated Press Award for this programming.

Twin City Initiative with Marathon, Greece, 2004

Appointed by the Hopkinton Board of Selectmen to establish a Twin-City relationship between Marathon, Greece and Hopkinton, Massachusetts. Collaborated with Massachusetts State Senator to officially recognize the international relationship between the twin-cities of Hopkinton, MA and Marathon, Greece.

Hopkinton Athletic Association Revitalization, 2005

At the request of several Hopkinton political and business leaders he asked to revitalize, re-structure and re-energize this non-profit organization for the purpose of restoring its fund raising potential. These efforts included recruiting a new board of directors, creating a business plan, and re-negotiating an updated license agreement with the BAA.

Kyriakides & Loues Marathon Sculpture, 2006

Managed the participation of corporate sponsor, local and state government officials, and key stakeholders in activities relating to the unveiling of a sculpture honoring the 1946 Boston Marathon win of Stylianos Kyriakides.

Marathon Flame Creation, 2007

Delivered remarks at the AIMS conference held in Marathon Greece. Represented Hopkinton, MA, USA at the ceremonial creation of the Flame of the Marathon. Advanced the twin-city relationship between Hopkinton, MA, USA and Marathon, Greece.

The Marathon Flame, 2008

Single point of contact in the USA for collaborating with key government (local, regional, state and national) and sports officials in Greece and the United States to bring the Flame of the Marathon Run from Marathon, Greece to Boston, MA, USA for the 112th running of the world's longest continuously running marathon.

- Orchestrated all logistics, events, media & public relations.
- Negotiated and secured kind corporate support.
- Collaborated with local, state, and national government officials in the United States and Greece

2,500th Anniversary of the Battle of Marathon, 2009

Appointed by Spyros Zagaris, Mayor of Marathon, Greece as his US representative for matters related to initiatives and international diplomatic relations for the 2010 celebration of the 2,500th Anniversary of the Battle of Marathon.

Marathon 2010

In conjunction with organizers of the Boston Marathon and the Marine Corps Marathon created activities, with Dimitri Kyriakides, that highlighted the 2,500th Anniversary of the Battle of Marathon including collaboration with the Embassy of Greece and the Greek Consulate of Boston.

Marathon and Stylianos Kyriakides 2010 – Present

Together with Dimitri Kyriakides they have travelled and attended the marathons of the cities of Athens, Limassol, Pafos, Shanghai, Xiamen where the history and spirit of marathon run and the legacy of Kyriakides were promoted in conferences, exhibitions, and presentations, also holding substantial school programs.

Tim Kilduff, speaking in schools in the city of Marathon.



Dimitri speaking in the Hopkinton schools.



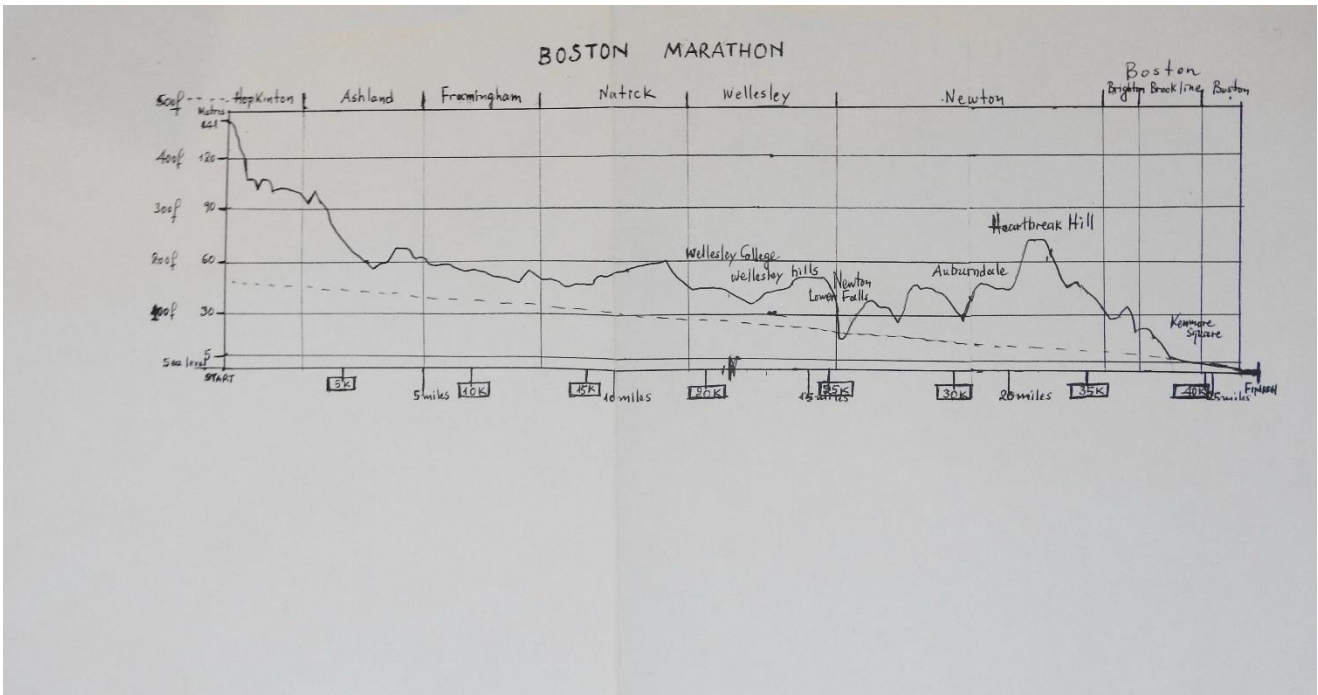
2010, celebrating the 2500th anniversary since the battle of Marathon.

At the Massachusetts State House and in Hopkinton



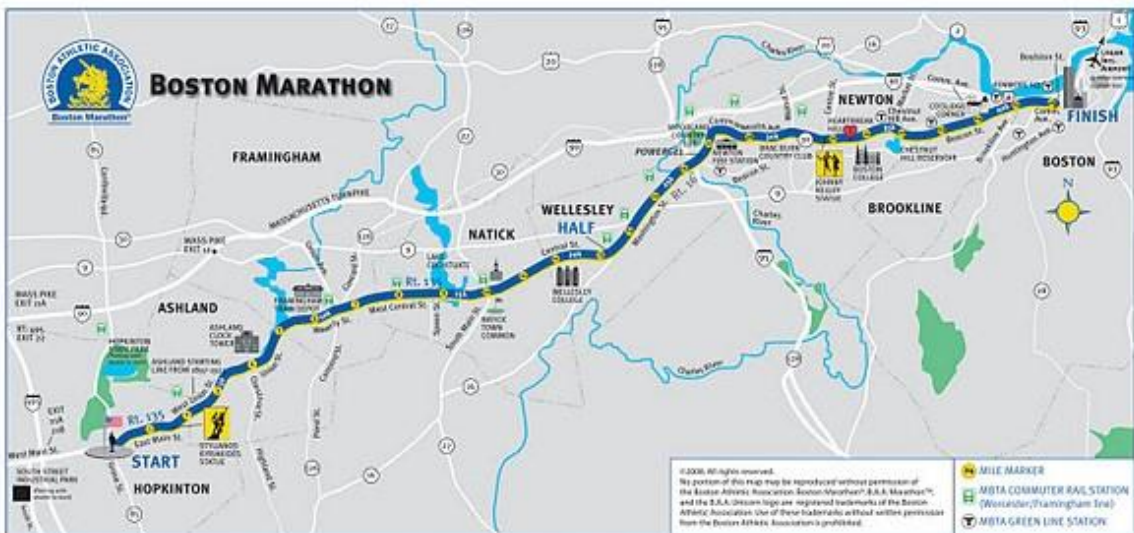
CHAPTER XVI

Interesting Photos



In 1938 Kyriakides asked Demeter to make for him an elevation map of the Boston course. Note that the distance markings are in miles and km for Stelios. The BAA did not give to the runners such a sketch.

There are only two statues in the Boston course: one of Kelley since 1993 and one of Stelios Kyriakides since 2006.



The historic course starts on Main Street in the rural New England town of Hopkinton and follows Route 135 through Ashland, Framingham, Natick, and Wellesley to where Route 16 joins Route 135. It continues on Route 16 through Newton Lower Falls to Commonwealth Avenue, turning

right at the fire station onto Commonwealth which is Route 30. It continues on Commonwealth through the Newton Hills, bearing right at the reservoir onto Chestnut Hill Avenue to Cleveland Circle. The route then turns left onto Beacon Street continuing to Kenmore Square,

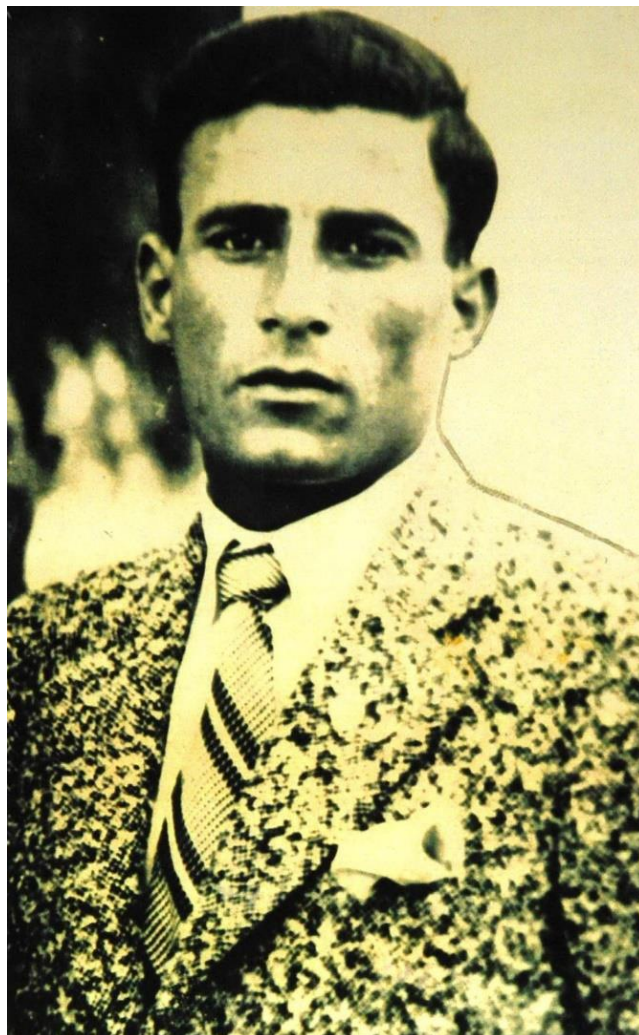
and then follows Commonwealth Avenue inbound. The course turns right onto Hereford Street (NOTE: against normal traffic flow) then left onto Boylston Street, finishing near the John Hancock Tower in Copley Square.





The flight tickets to and from NY in 1946. On his return ticket he has a lot of luggage.

In this photo of 1935, him as a 25-year-old handsome young man.





1934 – Photo with his coach and teammates in Limassol and
With some athletes from the Nicosia athletic club





1936 Berlin, Kyriakides standing next to the king of Greece.



1936 Berlin Olympics - the opening ceremony



Ο ΥΣΤΑΤΟΣ ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΣ ΜΟΥ

Σέ σένα Στέλιο θρυλικέ
κι αγαπητέ μου φίλε,
πού άνεδείχθης νικητής
στόν Δρόμο τής Βοστώνης
καί τήν 'Ελλάδα δόξασες
στά πέρατα του Κόσμου,

Τόν υστατον χαιρετισμόν
σοῦ άπευθύνω τώρα
καί τόν θεό παρακαλώ
νά σε δεχθῆ κοντά Του,
γιατ' ήσουν άνθρωπος άγνός
καί άξιο τ' όνομά σου.

Αθήναι, 11 Δεκεμβρίου 1987

Αθανάσιος Κ. Καλαντζής
(Παλαίμαχος άθλητής στίβου)

Μέ αυτά τά λόγια άποχαιρέτησα νοερώς τόν άξέχαστο φίλο μου
Στέλιο Κυριακίδη, όταν τόν συνοδεύαμε σήμερα τό άπόγευμα
στήν τελευταία του κατοικία, στό Α΄ Νεκροταφείο Αθηνών.

Since 1946, many poems and sketches have been written about him.

ΜΕΤΑ ΤΗΝ ΝΙΚΗ

— Βασίλειος
την 29/4/1946.

ΠΕΝΗΝΤΑ ΧΡΟΝΙΑ

Ήταν πριν πενήντα χρόνια. Ένας Λούης άθλητής
Ποῦρθεν άπ' τόν Μαραθώνα σαν παγκόσμιος νι-
(κτητής.
Κι' είπαν τότε όλο: οι ξένοι: "Άγγλοι, Αμερικάνοι,
(Γάλλοι:
— Είν'ή άθάνατη Έλλάδα που ξαναγεννιέται πάλι!

Και μετά πενήντα χρόνια. Ένας Κυριακίδης τρέχει
Κι' όπως σάρωσε τή νίκη, στρέφει ό κόσμος και
(προσέχει
Κι' ένας ψίθυρος μάς φτάνει με τή νίκη τή μεγάλη:
— Είν'ή άθάνατη Έλλάδα που ξαναγεννιέται πάλι!

ΑΡΙΣΤΟΦΑΝΗΣ

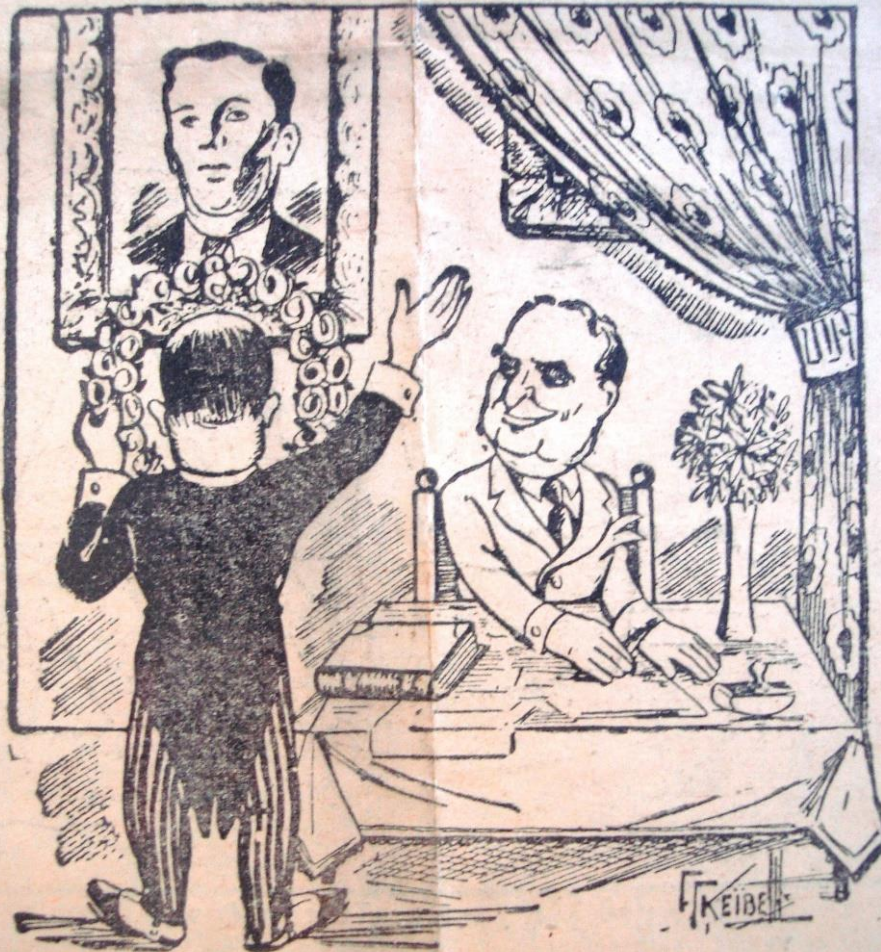
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΙΔΗΣ!

Αὐτὸς εἶναι ὁ Ἕλληνας. Συζήτησι δὲν θέλει !...
Τέσσερα χρόνια ἔτρωγε ρεβίθι καὶ μπιζέλι
Ἔποθε ἀδιταμίωσι, ἐπέθανε, ἔδουλίσσε
Καὶ ὁμως τὴ σημαία του πάντα ψηλά τὴν κρατῆσε !..

Καί, στὴ Βοστώνη ἔτρεξε ! Στῶν ἀθλητῶν τὰ πληθῆ
Μὲ τὸ μπιζέλι ὁ Ἕλληνας καὶ πάλιν ἐπεβλήθη
Καὶ ὅλοι τὸν καμάρωσαν καὶ εἶπαν οἱ Ἀμερικάνοι
Αὐτὴ ν' ἡ Ἑλλάδα ποῦ ποτέ, ποτέ δὲν θὰ πεθάνη !...

ΑΡΙΣΤΟΦΑΝΗΣ

Ο ΚΥΡΙΑΚΙΔΗΣ ΣΤΕΛΝΕΙ ΤΡΟΦΙΜΑ



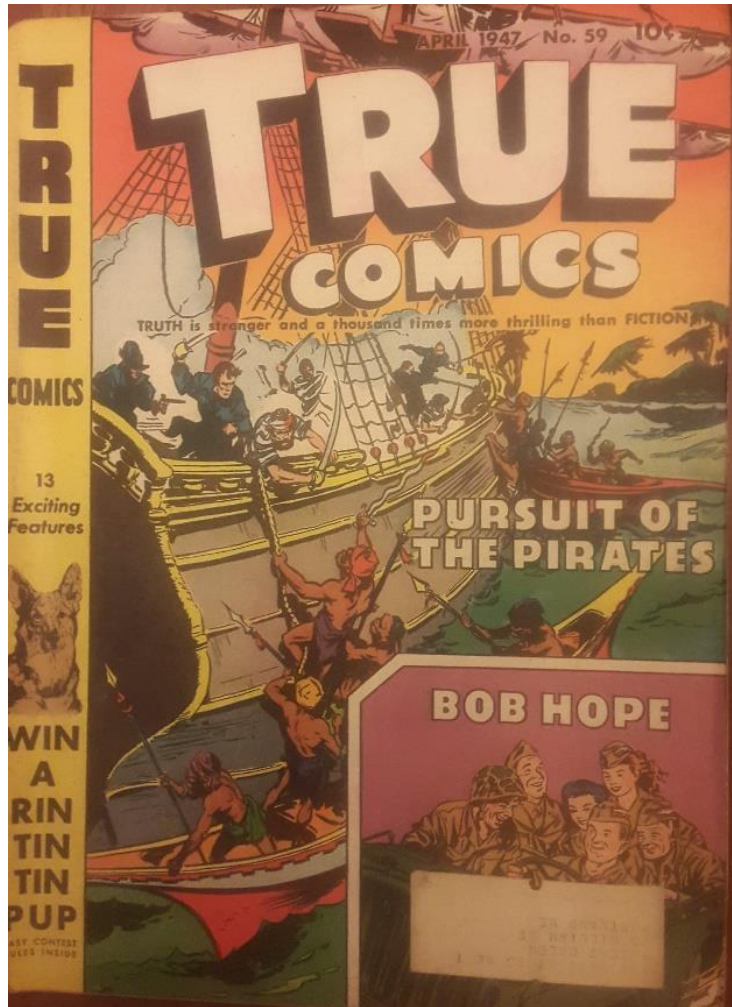
Ἐστεφανόπουλος (Ἐφοδιασμοῦ) : — Κυριακίδη, εἰσαι
ὁ.. Μάης τοῦ Ὑπουργείου μου!



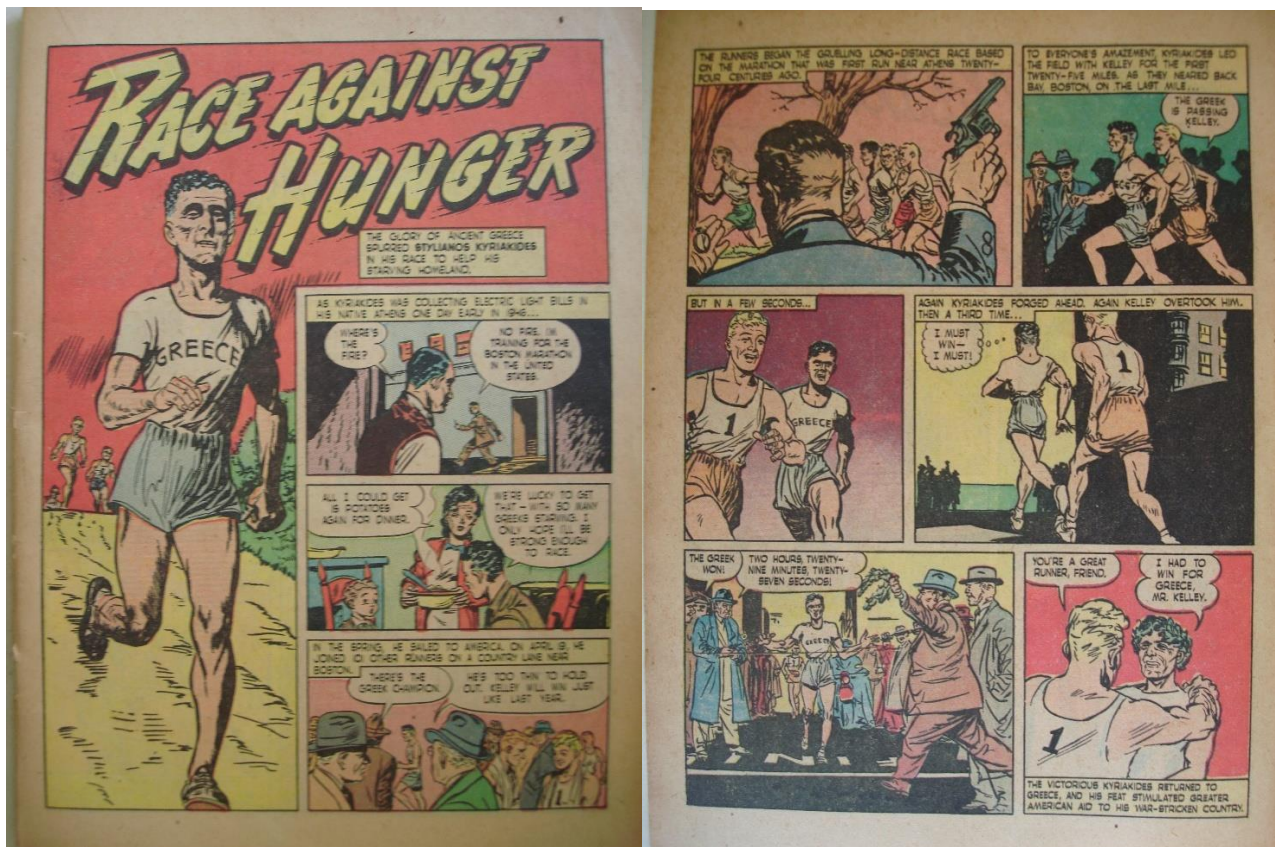
Typical hard leather running shoes of the 30s and 40s with toes going up.



The Emblem of the “Stelios Kyriakides” running club in Cyprus



1947 TRUE COMICS

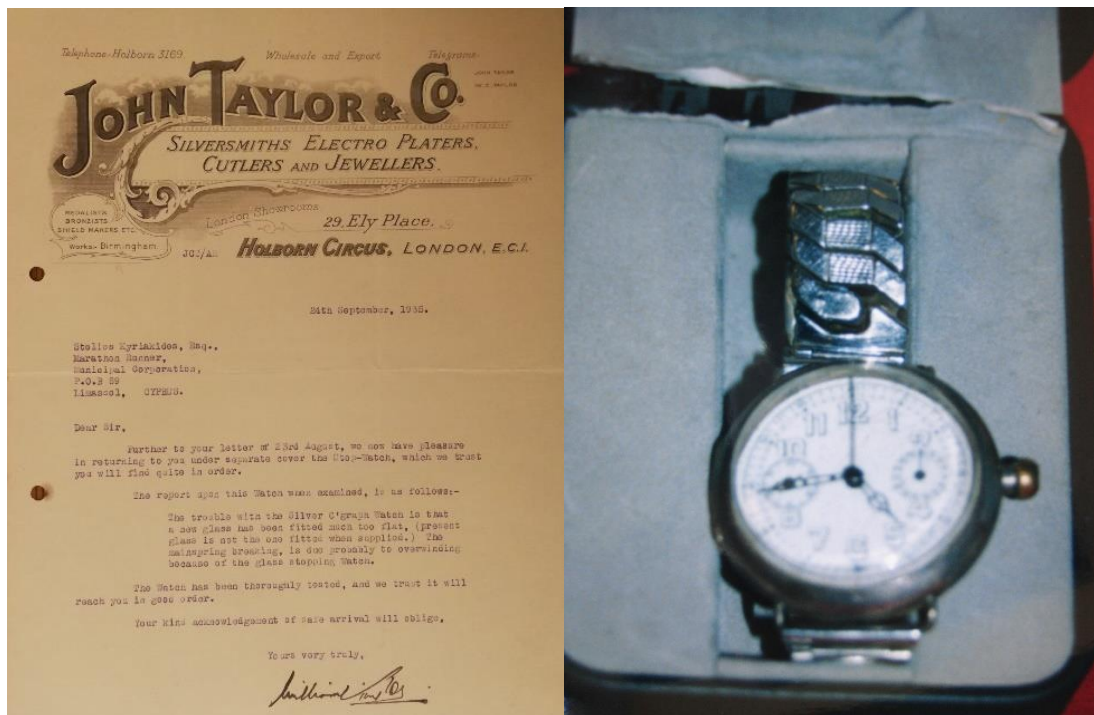


In 2008, Greek wine makers dedicated their wines to his memory during the ATHENS marathon.



1981, Stelios Sr. with Emily and Stelios Jr. inside the “Panathinaic” Marble Stadium

On his arrival from Boston to Greece in 1946 with Helen and Dimitri.



In 1935, as soon as Stelios arrived in London for the AAA championship, he sent his now famous wrist stopwatch for repair. He had bought it second hand in 1934.

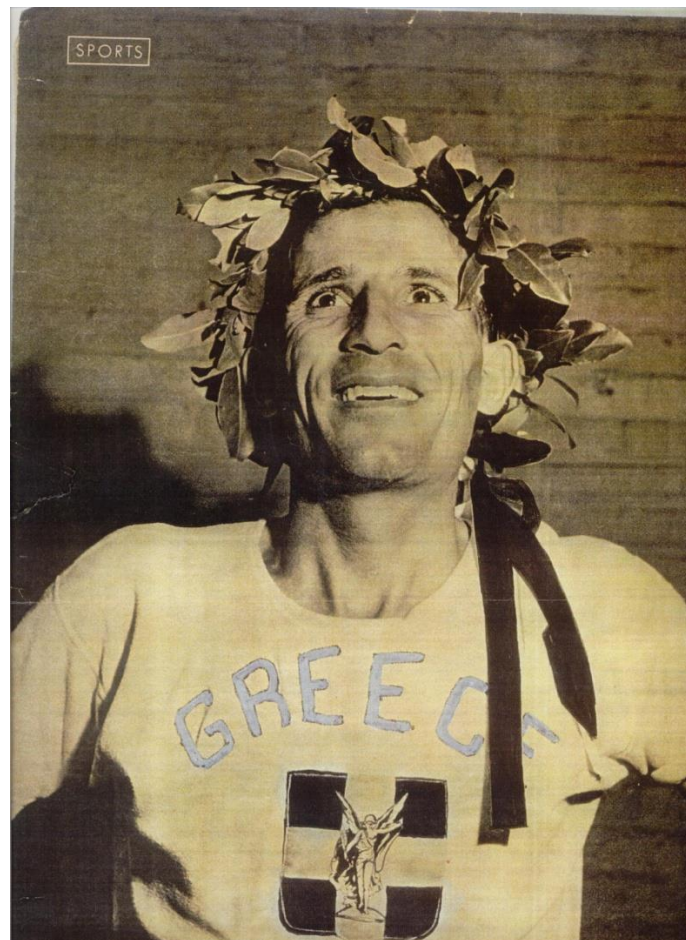


The Stamps issued in Cyprus, March 2020





The center fold photo on LIFE magazine May 1946





Alekos the orphan, receiving his Christmas presents from Stelios.

Kyriakides on his famous Norwegian bike





Photos taken with his KODAK camera in Berlin 1936 and the album he kept them in.
They are all in the Cyprus Olympic Museum.

He also took a photo of Johnny Kelley in Berlin and had him sign it.





In 2008 we brought the FLAME of the marathon run,
from Marathon to Hopkinton, where it all starts

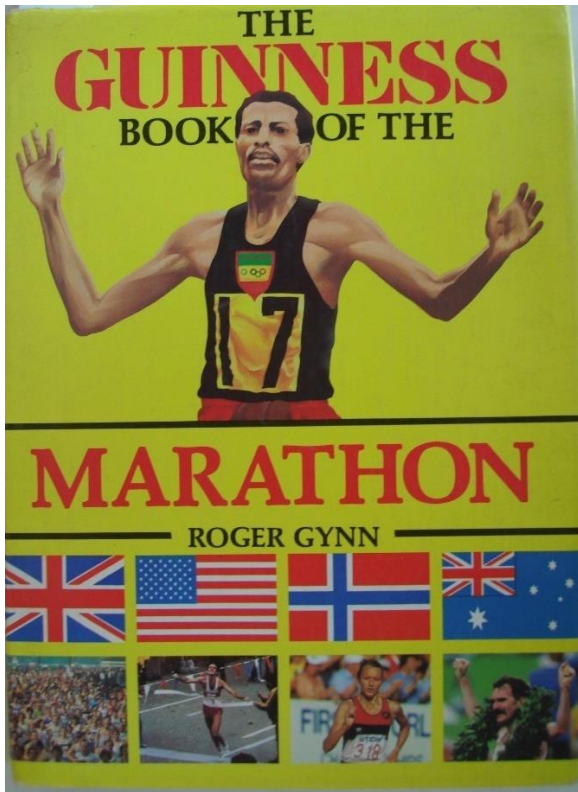


Johnny Kelley winning in 1945



Boston marathon in 1946





110

Rovithi whose time was 5:30:00. Yet there is nothing so vague about the eventual outcome of the first Olympic marathon on 10 April and won by Louis in 2:58:50 (see Games).

The national championship continued to be held but only irregularly until 1955, when it became an annual event. The same year saw the holding of the first Classical Marathon (see Races). Theofanis Tsimigatos has won most titles with five (1974, 1977-8, 1980-1). **Stylianos Kyriakidis, four time winner in the Balkan Games, set a European record of 2:29:27 in winning at Boston in 1946 and held the national record for 33 years 216 days, one of the longest ever such reigns.** Michail Koussis became the first Greek to better 2:20 in 1978 and holds the current best of 2:14:36 set at Amsterdam in 1982. Twice Balkan champion, he finished 10th in the 1978 European and 20th in the 1980 Olympics.

Turkey

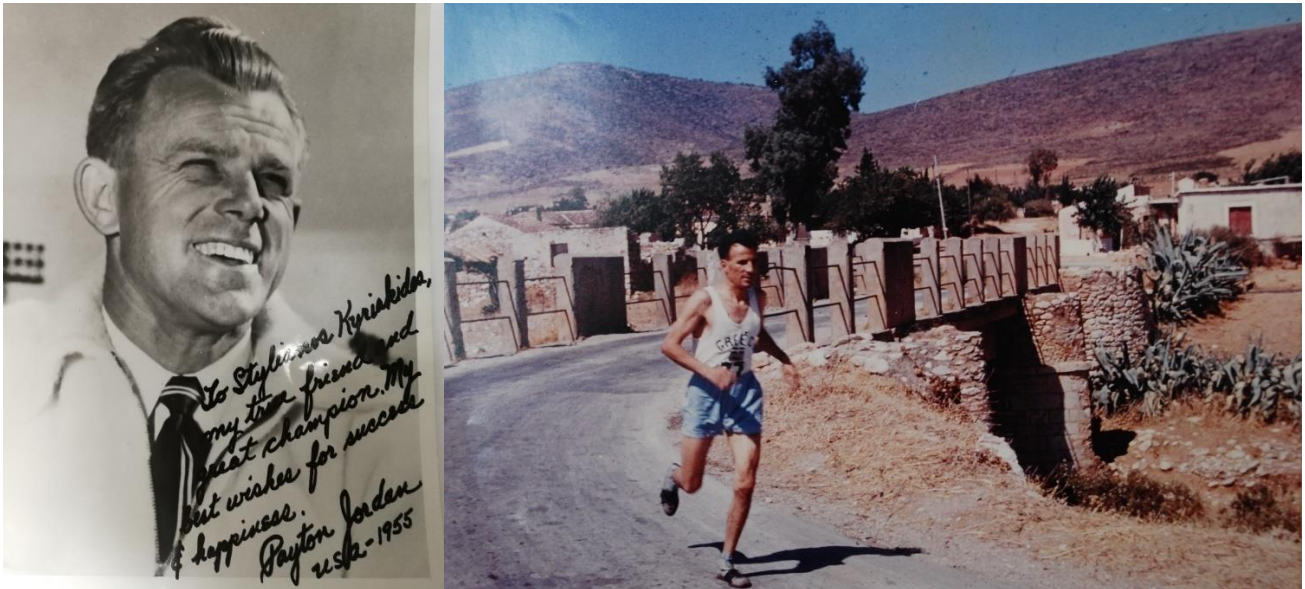
The first marathon, including the national championship, was held at Istanbul on 21 June 1938 and won by Selim Sunal in 3:21:50. Most wins have been by Ismail Akcay (eight) and Huseyin Aktas (six) between 1963 and 1976. The best performance in the Olympics...

Guinness book of marathon



2010, Dimitri in Hopkinton with the FLAME of marathon run

Payton Jordan (March 19, 1917 – February 5, 2009) was the head coach of the 1968 United States Olympic track and field team, one of the most powerful track teams ever assembled, which won a record twenty-four medals, including twelve golds. He was born in Whittier, California. Jordan was exceedingly successful as a collegiate track coach for a decade at Occidental College and for 23 years at Stanford University. A star three-sport athlete of track, rugby, football, in his youth, Jordan became one of the most dominant track athletes of all time, as a sprinter, in senior divisions (age 50 and over).



Payton Jordan in 1954 asked Stelios to put on his running gear and the Boston bib 77 and run at the start of Athens marathon for a photo. In the photo Stelios is seen crossing the small river just outside the city of Marathon.



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Stelios and Iphigenia in 1946