

SPORT FOR WOMEN MEANS LIFE

Sport and athletics, as everyone knows, make an enormous contribution both to personal well-being and to international peace and co-operation.

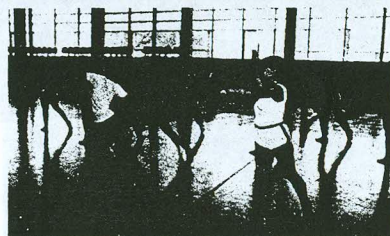
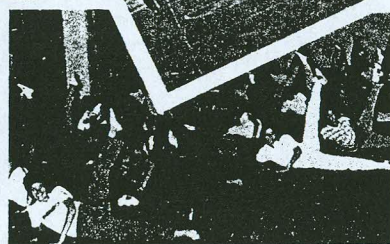
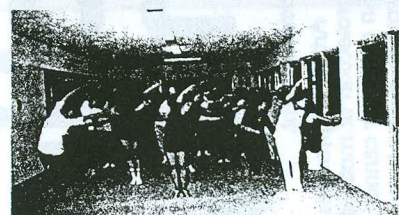
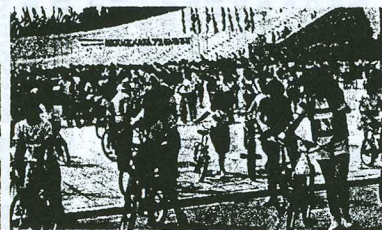
This is the reason for which the Ministry of Youth and Sport attaches so much importance to its various fitness programs for children and for women, which it sees as a fulfillment of a basic obligation on the part of the state towards the Greek people in general and young people in particular.

The Ministry's program for women — entitled "Movement Means Life" — began last year, and some sixty thousand women made use of the facilities it provided.

Among the most impressive events organized last year was the Bicycle Marathon, which attracted more than 2,000 women to a unique "race" around Athens with no winners and no prize money.

The project, organized jointly by the Ministry of Youth and Sport and local government authorities, is under way again this year, and is aimed at women of all ages all over the country. The program gives women an opportunity to train under proper guidance, take part in team games and look at their diet and health in a new light.

The program is organized by local government



"Women and sport". A program for women of all ages. Exercise classes in every district.

authorities in each region, and each woman is entitled to use its facilities twice a week, entirely free of charge. Specially trained physical education instructors lead the women in group exercises with musical accompaniment and advise them on matters

connected with their diet and their health.

Exercise of this kind does not just give a boost to the health of Greek women. It also provides a chance for them to get out of the rut of work at home or in the office or the factory, and to

broaden their social circle by making contacts among their neighbors. The program brings local government closer to the ordinary woman and acts as an opportunity for women to make the maximum possible use of their free time while helping

to establish sport as one of the most fundamental factors in improving the quality of life.

The following measures have been taken to ensure that the quality of the training provided is of the highest possible standard:

— physical education instructors have been sent to special "Sport for Women" seminars, lasting a month, in three cities in Finland.

— Raija Riikala and Anna Lisa Kainulainen, two well-known figures in the world of mass fitness programs, have been invited to Greece to teach seminars to be organized here.

— Seminars have been held in Athens (for 90 physical education instructors) and in Thessaloniki (for 140), with the aim of making the most of the experience gained last year.

This year, activities will be spread over 20 different parts of the country each month. Local government authorities will be grouped under a Regional Sport Officer, who will organize a number of different activities each month — walking, bicycling, running, and so on.

It is hoped that the program will operate in more than 150 local government areas this year, and that at least 120,000 women will be able to take part.

This figure will go a long way towards fulfilling the Ministry of Sport's basic goal, which is to have 600,000 Greeks — 5% of the country's total population — actively involved in sports.