



Joe Kelley

"Coolest" Sportsman

Tewksbury Man Takes Daily Dip in River

By Howard Iverson

TEWKSBURY—If nominations are still open for the "coolest" sportsman of 1961, we'd like to take this opportunity to enter Tewksbury's Joe Kelley in competition.

This hearty suburban specimen—who'll be 80 years young on January 13—considers the day lost if he fails to take his daily dip in the nearby Shawsheen river . . . year 'round. And that takes a stronger constitution and considerably more nerve than most of us younger folks could muster.

"I've been swimming in the Shawsheen for 75 years," says Joe, "and I've found that there's nothing like a refreshing dip each day to make things right with the world." Maybe so, but there must be a warmer solution to the cold war.

Strictly a pleasure swimmer, Joe has enjoyed his favorite pas-time the world over. The Carribbean sea, Honduras, the Gulf of Mexico, the coasts of both the Atlantic and Pacific have all served as Joe Kelley's private swimming pools.

parents, and savored the waters of the famed River Shannon and Kilarney lake. "But," claims Joe, "of all these strange and wonderful places, I've come to enjoy our own Shawsheen river the best of all." A shining tribute to the waterways of our own fair state.

While swimming in the frigid winter months, Joe makes only two small concessions to the arctic breezes and icy waters. "In wintertime I usually wait till afternoon for my dip. And on stormy days I don't go at all. The sun's warmth, feeble as it may be, takes the chill from the water and helps me dry off afterwards."

As a younster, Joe was a sports enthusiast. He played football in high school when "there was nothing scientific about the game. You just took the ball and ploughed your way through."

In later years he played baseball on the Tewksbury state hospital nine. He retired seven years ago from the hospital, where he was employed for more than 50 years.

A life long bachelor, Joe

has made his home at 61 Astel street for many years. Born and raised in Tewksbury, much of his manhood was spent near—or in—the Shawsheen river, mostly the latter. He favors the calm river waters as a place "where you can think and enjoy the quiet."

A TRUE lover of peaceful solitude, Joe may frequently be seen stepping briskly along the wooded back roads of the rural area communities. These extended hikes and the daily river plunges keep this ambitious pre-octogenarian in the peak of physical condition, far better than many of us forty or fifty years his junior.

Asked if he thought that his rigorous daily routine was responsible for his healthful longevity, Joe was unhesitant in his reply: "I'm sure that it does make for a long life. I've outlived the rest of my family and am still going strong."

So, today we take off our hat to Joe Kelley of Tewksbury. And admit that he's a far better man than most of us. Anyone for chess?