

*When the Sabbath comes,
you'll be glad you got
ready all week long.*



READY TO TAKE THE FIELD

By Richard M. Romney
Church Magazines

Mateo was playing the best soccer of his life. In the preseason, he'd scored five times. His passes were crisp, his defense superb. He was popular with fans, teammates, and coaches.

"So why not relax a little before the season opener?" he thought. The next week he took it easy. He arrived at practice just as it was starting and played with less than his best effort. "It's OK," he thought. "In the game, I'll turn it up a notch."

But the night before the match, friends came by. He stayed up late, then slept in, and barely arrived as the game was starting. When the coach asked what was wrong, he brushed it off. He couldn't remember the game plan, but it was too late to go over it again. "I'll just have to rely on what I did last week," he said.

The game did not go well. Mateo tried to blame teammates, coaches, and officials. But he knew in his heart that it was his fault. If you're into sports, you know why: if you want to play well, you prepare all week long. Then when the real game comes you're ready to take the field.



SOMETHING BIGGER

Having heard Mateo's story, let's talk about something bigger you need to prepare for all week long: the Sabbath. You can get in all-star shape for it with these ideas.



DURING THE WEEK

Just like you do in sports, focus on basics. Pray. Participate in family home evening. Go to Young Men or Young Women, Mutual activities, and service projects. Think of these as your conditioning drills. Study the scriptures. That's like reading the spiritual playbook. Church videos that relate to the week's topic can be like watching team films.

Develop a game plan. You know you're supposed to always remember the Savior. What can you do to be ready to renew that promise when you take the sacrament?

And what about assignments? Is there anything you need to get ready, like a talk, a lesson, or an agenda? Preparation will be more

complete if you're working on it all week long.



THE DAY BEFORE

Sports teams usually have a run-through the day before a game. You can do the same by making sure your "uniform" is ready. Knowing on Saturday what you'll wear on Sunday means you won't be as rushed before church. Also, finish prepping for talks or lessons. If tomorrow is fast Sunday, plan around when you'll start your fast. Do you have something specific to fast for? Make sure to start your fast with prayer.

Also, enforce a personal training rule. Since you want to be alert during meetings, get enough sleep the night before. Athletes have curfews. You can too.

A Pep Song

Maybe a pep song will help you get ready for Sunday. How about page 196 in the *Children's Songbook*? "Saturday is a special day. It's the day we get ready for Sunday." But you might want to sing it on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.





ON SUNDAY

The big day is here. Give yourself every advantage by getting up early. Listen to music that will prepare you for worship. Help junior “players” (younger brothers and sisters) to “suit up.” Have a family prayer, and get to the meetinghouse early. As assigned, prepare the “field” by setting up chairs and organizing classrooms. Ask teachers if you can get anything for

COUNSEL WITH YOUR “COACHES”

Think of your parents as your head coaches and your leaders as additional coaches and trainers. Just like an athlete accepts advice from the coaching staff, you can seek counsel from parents and leaders about how to better prepare for the Sabbath day.

them. If you’re in a presidency, huddle together and make sure you’re good to go before church starts. Enter the chapel early and prepare by reverently listening to the prelude music.

Stay focused by singing the hymns, thinking about the Savior during the sacrament, and helping your siblings as you sit with your family. In Sunday School and quorum and class lessons, take part and encourage others to join in. Offer comments, share experiences, read out loud, and keep your mind on what you’re doing. Set goals together and individually. Be a “team player.”

After church, fill your day with spiritual experiences: researching family history, writing in a journal, gathering fast offerings (for young men), or sharing what you learned in church with your family. Visit someone who is sick or lonely. As the scriptures say, make the Sabbath a delight by doing God’s work on His special day (see Isaiah 58:13).



Share #HisDay

Share your Sabbath experiences on social media with the hashtag #HisDay. For more information, go to lds.org/sabbath-day.

STRENGTHENING YOUR SABBATH EXPERIENCE

By the way, after one bad week, Mateo returned to proper preparation and strengthened his season. Each week he focused on the basics and got ready all week long. From then on, he came to games ready to take the field.

How about you? Would some proper preparation strengthen your Sabbath? Start now. You’ll find yourself looking forward to the most important day of the week. **NE**