

Sports Quest Prison Soccer Ministry

Match Day

Friday February 17, 2006

Match Result

Sports Quest 3
Beaumont 5



Match Analysis

Playing against a tough, physical, highly skilled and well organized prison team, Sports Quest found themselves 3 goals behind within 20 minutes of the opening whistle. Goal number 1: A through ball which was neatly tucked away from 12 yards, despite a reasonable claim for offside; Goal number 2: A horrible mix up in the Sports Quest defense, resulting in an own goal; Goal number 3: Another defensive woe with clinical finishing from a lively and grateful inmate...3 – 0 at the half time interval.

The second half saw a vast half improvement in both performance and commitment from Sports Quest. A Mark Miller “special”, followed by a Kevin Dove “once in a blue moon” left-footed wonder strike put Sports Quest back in the running...3-2 with over 25 minutes remaining. Alas, another defensive calamity and excellent finish restored the 2 goal cushion for the inmates. A dubious penalty and subsequent conversion made it 5-2 against, yet the game ended on a positive note with the irrepressible Mark Miller (fresh from his tryouts with Houston 1836) scoring with a trademark drive from 20 yards.

Match Highlights

The Sports Quest pre-game warm up was magnificent!

Match Lowlights

Everything after the pre-game warm up!

The Bigger Picture (Acts 16:16-34)

The disappointing result was overshadowed by the joy of presenting a message of grace, hope and love to the prison inmates...**“True freedom is found in Jesus Christ...”**



Back row: Kevin Dove, Chris Gumzelman, Jim Spence, Joshua Robinson, Timmy Zacharias, Wesley Frommel, Ruben Ayala.
Front row: Mark Miller, Matt Miller, Cody Albert, William Krasner, James Norvell, Khiem Nguyen.

Message Overview & Context

- Paul & Silas are in prison (stocks) guarded by a Roman jailer. Theirs was an unjust imprisonment
- Paul & Silas pray & sing hymns at midnight despite their situation
- A violent earthquake causes all the prison doors to fly open, and everyone’s chains fall off
- The jailer wakes up and is about to kill himself until Paul stops him
- The jailer asks what he must do to be saved. Paul tells him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ
- The jailer believes in Christ (he and his whole household)
- The jailer serves Paul & Silas, tends to their wounds, feeds them and is filled with joy because of his belief in Jesus

Application

- Life can be very unfair. Paul and Silas are a testimony to this
- Life is tough, even for the Christian (Paul and Silas were devout, yet still suffered)
- The Christian is empowered to face tough situations with joy (Paul and Silas singing and praying in prison)
- Tough situations cause us to think of eternity (eg. the jailer... "what must I do to be saved?")
- People are changed once they come to Christ (the jailer who once inflicted the wounds, now heals them)

Scripture

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."
2 Corinthians 3:17

Eternal Perspective

From a soccer standpoint, the 200 mile round trip to Beaumont was frustrating to say the least. Convincingly beaten by a better team, the 5-3 score line flattered Sports Quest: The inmates were superior in every department on the day.

Yet the message of the cross, though foolishness to many (1 Corinthians 1:18) remains the focus and purpose of our prison visits. We are Christ's ambassadors, "as though God were making His appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20). While we enjoy the physical and combative nature of competition, we appreciate more the spiritual challenge we are able to lay before the inmates. **Do they know Jesus Christ personally**

as their Lord and Savior? Do they know what it means to be set free by the truth of Jesus Christ (John 8:32)? Are they able to comprehend how the marvelous grace of God cuts across racial boundaries, or how his love extends to the worst offender imaginable? Can they truly grasp that though their physical liberties may have been removed, they may be spiritually more liberated than many on the "outside"? Sports Quest's prison ministry soccer games are never a waste. We may win some and most certainly we'll lose others. The key issue is not the "win-loss column" at the end of a season. The big picture is soul winning: reaching out to others with a message of hope, encouragement and forgiveness.

"The marvelous grace of God cuts across racial boundaries..."

A Final Word from Bill Jacques, Beaumont Prison Recreation Officer

"You have no idea what it means for the inmates to have Sports Quest play in our institution. They talk about your visit for months before and months after the game. Unfortunately, when they win, we get to hear about it time & time again!"

"The game is like the Super Bowl to the inmates and they take it very seriously. Just the other day, the prison wardens looked across the yard to see a group of men huddled together in close quarters. This typically spells danger so we immediately went to check out the situation. What we found was not an inmate takeover plot, but the soccer team strategizing in the sand their tactical plan for their game with Sports Quest! That's how much it means. The game gives them hope and something to look forward to...they appreciate Sports Quest, and so do we."

The "Beaumont All Stars" have not been beaten in 10 years!

Special Thanks To:

- All the players of Sports Quest and inmates at Beaumont Low Security Prison
- Bill Jacques and staff at the Beaumont prison
- North Oaks Baptist Church (Houston) for the use of their passenger van

Next Game

May 2006

For Further Information about Sports Quest Soccer Ministries, Contact:

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"The Lord is my strength and my shield"