

The Iron Man

Cal Ripken Jr. earned the title of the Iron Man of baseball. On September 6, 1995, he broke the record held by Lou Gehrig of 2,130 consecutive games played. Of course, there were days when that consecutive streak was in danger.

In a June 1993 game, Ripken was involved in a bench-clearing brawl. It was reported in *Time* magazine: Ripken twisted his knee, and when he woke up the next morning, he couldn't put his weight on it. He told his wife, Kelly, he might not be able to play that night.

According to Kelly, "Just before he left for the ball park, I said, 'Maybe you could just play one inning and then come out.' He snapped, 'No! Either I play the whole game or I don't play at all.' I told him, 'Just checking, dear.'"

Ripken did play the full nine innings that night. In fact, he played in 99.2 percent of every Orioles game since the streak began.

In any high pursuit, we face the temptation to lower our standards, to do just enough to get by. Cal Ripken Jr. had committed himself to walk worthy of the title of Iron Man.

How is your commitment? Your perseverance? Your determination? Your standards?

Do you walk worthy of the mission to which you are called?

--Beecher Hunter